
**T H I R D
WORLD
QUARTERL**

Journal of Emerging Areas

both warring parties were to be sustained by the principle protagonists in the Cold War. The revolt against President Najibullah by his own army in 1992 came only after the former Soviet Union cut all food and weapons aid to the regime. Thus the Afghan state was intrinsically fragile and remains so today.

Both sides also preferred to militarise the conflict rather than build alternative political administrations and alliances. Thus 42% of President Najibullah's Central Committee were drawn from the army and the intelligence services. Rubin describes how Khad, the Afghan intelligence agency, replaced politics with a generalised violence against the entire Afghan society. Likewise the US and Pakistan took a policy decision to support those Mujheddin leaders who killed the most Russians, rather than those who enjoyed popularity or built liberated zones where a civilian administration could take root.

Rubin shows how critical the Afghan conflict had become by 1989 when the Soviets began their withdrawal. In that year, the Soviets pumped in some US\$3 billion worth of weapons and other aid to save the Kabul regime, while the US and Saudi Arabia responded with grants of nearly US\$2 billion to the Mujheddin to conquer Kabul—staggering sums even in today's world and almost all totally wasted.

The CIA and the ISI come in for severe criticism. The author describes how both agencies favoured the fundamentalist Mujheddin, forbidding more traditional Afghan methods of creating a political consensus such as the Loya Jirga. He also describes how the ISI used weapons and money to sustain a fragmented leadership, where commanders were built up and then deliberately undermined by providing their lieutenants with arms, so that they could not build independent political bases, and how radicals like Hikmetyar received 100% of the cost of transporting weapons into Afghanistan while the moderate groups received only 15%. Forced to sell weapons to pay for donkeys, the moderates were then branded as corrupt by the ISI and CIA.

Rubin's description of the shifting alliances and deals that were made in the 1992 Mujheddin take-over of Kabul is certainly the best and most authoritative to date, even though he leans heavily in favour of commander Ahmad Shah Masud, the powerful General who virtually rules Kabul today. For Masud's role in building up an independent power base, free of foreign intelligence manipulation and his military prowess, the authors bias may be justified. But it is Ahmad Shah's lack of political acumen and inability to forge and sustain political rather than military alliances, that has perhaps created the present impasse where the Kabul regime is now facing threats from all sides.

Masud was able to enter Kabul in 1992 because the Parcham-based officer corps in the city let him in, once Najibulla had stepped down. Rubin writes that in those critical days when Masud was based in Charikar, outside Kabul and was invited by Parcham to become head of state, he was reassuring Pashtun commanders that he would not take up the offer or enter Kabul unilaterally. I visited Masud several times in Charikar at that time and in fact he was trying to persuade Pashtun commanders to dump Hikmetyar and join him in the march on Kabul.

Much as senior Pashtun commanders such as Abdul Haq and Jalaluddin Haqqani hated Hikmetyar, they remained unpersuaded by Masud. His failure to win over even nominal support from the Pashtuns has plagued him ever since. The fact remains that even moderate Pashtuns did not trust Masud's politics or his overriding ambition. Later Masud then failed to hold together his own alliance with Uzbek General Rashid Dostum and the Shia Hazaras. By 1993, they had both been offended by him and joined up with Hikmetyar. Today Rabbani and Masud are facing a combined opposition of many of those forces who were once allied with them.

Rubin's book is a catalogue of failures. The failure of communism and Islam, the failure of state building in a tribal society, the failures of the Cold War and the proxy war that it's protagonists fought in Afghanistan. Only for the ordinary Afghan, who

THIRD WORLD QUARTERLY

Journal of Emerging Areas

EDITOR: SHAHID QADIR

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ADVERTISING RATES

Full page mono		
130mm x 210mm	£280	\$450
Half page mono		
130mm x 100mm	£175	\$280

All space must be booked in advance and camera-ready copy supplied at least six weeks before publication. Please contact the Advertising Department at Carfax Publishing Company for further details.

ABSTRACT SERVICES

Third World Quarterly is currently noted in ABC Pol A Bibliography of Contents; Political Science and Government; America: History and Life; Asian Bus Contents; British Humanities Index; Current Contents Development Index; Historical Abstracts; International Development Abstracts; International Political Science Abstracts; Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts; Periodica Islamica; Political Science Abstracts; Public Affairs Information Service Indexes; Sage Public Administration Abstracts; Social Policy/Planning Abstracts; Social Science Citation Index; Sociological Abstracts.

US MAILING NOTICE

Third World Quarterly is published four times a year: March, June, September and December. Second class postage paid at South Hackensack NJ. Postmaster please send address corrections to

Third World Quarterly, c/o Carfax Publishing Company
875-81 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 021
USA

Printed and Bound in Great Britain by Wace Burgess,
Abingdon, Oxfordshire, England

fought and died heroically under the bullet or torture, there was no failure, only a deep despair which continues to this day.

Rubin's book looks at the underlying trends in Afghan society that first helped create such a conflict and then helped distance all participants to the point where any solution remains difficult. Both books are brilliant tour de forces, emanating from a deep passion not only for Afghans and their tragedy, but also a passion for impeccable scholarship and a profound wisdom.

Celebrating the UN's 50th Anniversary? Don't Forget the Missing Piece!



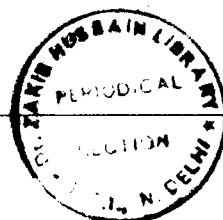
Ever had the feeling something's missing? The United Nations of today was designed 50 years ago to reflect the diversity of all nations and promote peace. Yet, at the world body's 50th anniversary celebration this year in San Francisco, one of UN's founding members, the Republic of China, is being kept on the sidelines.

Even though one missing piece might not seem to affect the overall picture that much, that piece still represents the 21 million people of the Republic of China on Taiwan, more than the population of any of nearly two-thirds of the UN membership. Until ROC citizens are given a voice at the UN, the world body can hardly be truly universal.

The people of Taiwan have much to offer the world if it will only let them give: experience in accomplishing remarkable economic growth, and peacefully achieving democracy to name just a couple. As we savor this milestone for the UN and look to the future, doesn't it make a lot of sense to complete the picture now?

Return the Republic of China on Taiwan to the UN!

TODAY'S TAIWAN
REPUBLIC OF CHINA



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Zur Investitionsbereitschaft türkischer Remigranten

Publisher: Deutsches Orient-Institut, Hamburg

Editor: Udo Steinbach

Assistant Editor: Gerda Max

ORIENT is published three-monthly. Price per issue DM 35,-, annual subscription DM 116,- plus postage

LESKE VERLAG & BUDRICH GMBH

Postfach 300 551, 51334 Leverkusen/Germany



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1995 - Volume 4 (3 issues). ISSN 0958-4935.

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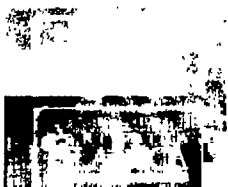
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Civilisational conflict? fighting the enemy under a new banner

ADAM TAROCK

The conceptual framework of the Cold War was constructed primarily by Western, in particular US, intellectuals and the academic community. Along with the military strategists and foreign policy elites, they kept the world conceptually divided for 45 years between what they called the 'captive' and the 'free' worlds. In between there was the 'other' world, the Third World, which became a theatre, perhaps the only one, in which US and Soviet ambitions clashed violently, a theatre in which these conflicts often threatened to ignite wider war, from Asia, Latin America, Africa to the Middle East. However, although the Third world was an important part in the superpowers' global geopolitical game, by itself it was never considered a potential threat to the security of either of the other two worlds. The end of the Cold War has changed the inoffensive and in some cases the victim image of the Third World. Since then, in the minds of many US foreign policy elites and American academics, that inoffensive image has changed to a potentially aggressive enemy image. These elites and academics view the new enemy in a different light. Whereas the Eastern bloc opponents were perceived as possessing the autonomy and rationality one accords one's own system and cultural values, the new opponents are viewed as germs, swarms or at best human beings lacking objectivity, with a culture which is more inclined towards war than towards peace. This view, prevalent among some academics, holds that in the post-Cold War world the risk of war with the Third World is greater than it was with the communist states. Whereas the old conflict, it is asserted, was between the ideologies and economic systems of communism and capitalism, the new conflict will be between Western and non-Western civilisations.

As in the previous politico-economic war, so too in the present one a group of academics is providing the conceptual ammunition for the new war. It is being fought under the banner of 'The Clash of Civilisations?'¹ the clash being between the Judeo-Christian and the Islamic and Confucian civilisations. The flag bearer of the civilisational war is Harvard University professor Samuel Huntington, one of the great US thinkers of recent decades. A similar thesis has also been advanced by other writers and academics such as Steven David, Anthony Lake and Charles Krauthammer.²

The intention of this article is to take issue with the argument advanced by these writers that there is a good possibility of a 'civilisational' war between the Western and non-Western societies. It will argue that, as in the conflicts during the Cold War, the predicted coming conflicts between the First and the Third Worlds will be politico-economic and not civilisational conflicts. Also, in the last section of the article it will be argued that, for the West, fighting the 'other'

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civilisations will be much more difficult and costly than combating communism. However, the point that needs to be made here is that, because scholars are trained to drape their prejudices and political biases in the trappings of objectivity, independence and scholarship, their intellectual contributions to the 'new' war are likely to validate and give legitimacy to the view that the West is the embattled defender of higher human values and, therefore, it must prepare for a war against the forces of destruction from the non-Western world. It should be noted, as has been noted elsewhere, that US academics have in recent decades 'commanded the attention of strategic planners and policy experts in (or close to) the US government ... All through the Cold War, scholars ... underwrote the ideology [and] the harmony of interests between the US and the rest of the world'.¹ It is therefore reasonable to argue that Huntington's civilisational paradigm—as well as the warnings by other scholars that in the post-Cold War era the Third World has the potential to threaten the security of the West—are likely to command similar attention from US foreign policy elites and the military strategists—as did their views on development and modernisation of the Third World a few decades ago. The recent views expressed by these writers should not be left uncontested.

The West versus the non-West

The core of Huntington's thesis is essentially similar to what we were acquainted with during the Cold War. This was that the values of the Western-Christian world were under threat from the anti-democratic and atheistic traditions of communism; the same values, he warns us, are once again under threat, this time from non-Western societies. This new conflict, it is argued, is likely to be much more intense as well as larger in scope than the economic and ideological conflicts which dominated international politics for nearly half a century. This is because, according to Huntington, for a century and a half great wars as well as the Cold War were 'between Western civilisations'. But from now it will be between Western civilisation and the Muslim and Confucian civilisations.

In 'The clash of civilisations?' Huntington argues that in the future global politics will not be dominated by differences of ideologies between the First, Second and Third Worlds. It will be dominated by the conflicts between civilisations. He defines a civilisation as a cultural entity, arguing that civilisation is 'the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species'. But a few paragraphs later he leaves one with the impression that what he calls cultural conflict is just another term for racial conflict. According to him:

North African immigration to France generates hostility among Frenchmen and at the same time increased receptivity to immigration by "good" European Catholic Poles. Americans react far more negatively to Japanese investment than to larger investments from Canada and European countries.

If we take culture as a shorthand for a people's language, music, food, religion, social norms and customs, etc, things which are not hereditary, then it is correct to say that a black African born in France, educated in French schools and

possibly holding a Sorbonne post-graduate degree, eating French food and/or patronising French cultural centres, is by definition a 'Frenchman' and should therefore be accepted by the French as a Pole is accepted by them. The same thing can be said for the negative reception of Japanese investments in America and the welcome reception of Canadian and European investments. Therefore, it is not the Japanese investments but the Japanese 'investors' whom the Americans react to negatively. The same can be said of the acceptance of Arab capital and the unwelcome reception of Arab investors in Britain. To put it differently, the controversy over non-Western immigrants in the West, in the final analysis, is about the colour of the immigrant investor and not about the colour of his money, which may clash with the colour of European or American banknotes.

Huntington stretches his theory of the clash of civilisations very thinly indeed when he says that economic agreements between nations of similar or identical culture work better than agreements between Western and non-Western cultures. In support of his assertion, he gives the examples of the European Union which 'rests on the shared foundation of European culture and Western Christianity' and of the Economic Cooperation Organisation among the non-Arab Muslim countries of Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Central Asian republics. Really? What about the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC) formed between Australia, New Zealand, the USA, and the Confucian and Muslim countries of Southeast Asia plus some Latin American countries? The disagreement on policy matters between the APEC member countries is no greater than, say, that between the EU member countries. Or what about the military pacts signed before and since the end of the Cold War between the USA and non-Western Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt and Turkey, to name a few. The participants in these agreements, coming from different civilisations, were driven primarily by their common commercial interests and shared political orientations. In other words, contrary to Huntington's assertion, in the post-Cold War world economics and ideology, and not civilisation-to-civilisation, still matter greatly in relations between nations.

Huntington cites the Persian Gulf War of 1991 as another example which would validate his theory about the kind of civilisational wars we are likely to see in the post-Cold War era. He argues that only 'the Western-backed' governments of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia wholeheartedly supported the war against Iraq, while Arab intellectuals and several Arab leaders, including King Hussein of Jordan, opposed it on the ground that it was a Christian war against the Arabs and all Muslims. In fact it was anything but a Christian versus non-Christian war. It was essentially, as most students of international politics would argue, an economic and ideological war. For how else can one explain the fact that Saudi Arabia, the bastion of Islamic fundamentalism and the self-proclaimed guardian of the House of God, Mecca, along with other Muslim states like Egypt, Turkey, Morocco, Syria and others, helped hoist the flag of France, the UK and the USA in a war against Muslim Iraq.

Moreover, Iran, the most ardent supporter of the Islamic civilisation and Islamic values, did not join the war despite Saddam Hussein's claim (for his own political end) that the war was aimed against Islam and Muslims. Iran did not join the war for, among other things, ideological reasons; it did not see the war

as a conflict between the Christian and Muslim civilisations. Iran was happy to see Saddam Hussein defeated by the very Western states which had materially and financially supported him during the Iran–Iraq war. Moreover, the continuing turbulent relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia scarcely makes Huntington's theory of civilisational 'brotherhood' convincing. The cultural values of both peoples and of their ruling elites are rooted in Islam; yet they have been at loggerheads, not the least since the end of the Cold War, because of differences in their ideological and commercial orientations. The conservative Saudis pursue a pro-American foreign policy, the revolutionary Iranians take the opposite path. The former is for higher oil production to keep the price of oil down, the latter for lower production and higher oil prices. The Saudis insist that pilgrims to Mecca must confine themselves to religious rituals, while Iran says that the Hajj pilgrimage is, in addition to being a religious duty, a venue for Muslims to debate the sociopolitical problems facing the Muslim world. The point here is that these states, like all other states, pursue policies and ideologies which they believe are in their national interests and security, notwithstanding their cultural commonality.

Huntington's other example of civilisational war is the war between the Armenians and the Azerbaijanis. The issues involved in this regional war, as in other regional wars before, during and since the end of the Cold War, are political and territorial claims. In the early stages of the war, Russia supported Muslim Azerbaijan because the Azeri leaders were mostly former communists. It was when the communists appeared to be losing power that the Russians tilted towards the Armenians. A policy shift based on ideological and not Christian kinship. Conversely, Iran initially supported the Armenians for political reasons. First, the Azeri leadership was made up mostly of the aforementioned former communists. Second, because of political and ideological rivalry between Turkey and Iran (the former secular, pro-American, the latter clerical and anti-American) Teheran chose to side with Armenia when Turkey was reluctant to open its borders to that country, and had thus virtually isolated it, and was trying to frustrate Iran's influence in Azerbaijan. And while the war was going on between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Iran and Armenia signed an agreement for the supply of Iranian oil and gas to Armenia through the construction of a pipe line.⁴ Again, a cooperation between the two nations based on their respective political and economic interests.

'The Islamic–Confucian connection'

Huntington predicts, rather ominously, that 'a West at the peak of its power [following the collapse of communism] confronts a non-West that increasingly has the desire, the will and the resources to shape the world in non-Western ways'. Until now the West, we are told, was under threat from the 'communist hordes'.⁵ From now on, Huntington warns us, the conflict will be between the West and an Islamic–Confucian alliance, as well as between the West and a collection of other civilisations: Hindu, Buddhist, Japanese, Latin American and Slavic–Orthodox. In short, in the post-Cold War era the West is confronted by the 'rest'. He leaves no one in doubt that his 'Christian West' is made up of

mainly Western Europe and the United States. However, although the West is now confronted by a number of civilisations, the greatest 'challenge [to] Western interests, values, and power [comes from] the Islamic-Confucian connection'. According to Huntington, this connection is currently manifested in the form of a flow of arms and weapons technology from Confucian China to Islamic countries. That may be true, but it is also true that, between 1985 and 1992, Saudi Arabia and Iraq together received arms deliveries from the West totalling \$79.6 billion.⁶ But no one has called that the Christian-Muslim connection. In any case, in the civilisational competition the West will inevitably be on the defensive, 'since the values that are most important to the West are the least important worldwide'.

And which of these values are unimportant to the non-Western states? 'Arms control, which is a Western concept ...' is one of them. Simply amazing. Can we really take him seriously? Was it not the West that during the Cold War *and* since has pushed hardest for the spread and sale of billions of dollars worth of weapons to the non-Western states, that is, to the Third World? Perhaps he means control and banning of arms sales to the states which the West considers 'unfriendly', for we already know that between 1981-88 *alone* the West exported \$381 billion of sophisticated weapons to 'friendly' countries in the Third World.⁷ Another like-minded political commentator, Charles Krauthammer, has a different name for the states which do not appreciate the Western concept of arms control. He calls them the 'Weapons States [which] have deep grievances against the West ... and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery will constitute the greatest threat to world [ie Western] security'.⁸ Krauthammer includes Iraq among such states, choosing to ignore the fact that it was the West which made Iraq a 'Weapons State' and enabled Saddam Hussein to aim for the development of nuclear capability.⁹ But of course Saddam Hussein was then 'our' friend fighting the Iranians, who were seen as a threat to Western civilisation. Not surprisingly, neither Krauthammer's list of the 'Weapons States', nor Huntington's list of the countries not respecting the concept of arms control includes Saudi Arabia, which in 1993 had on order \$30 billion dollars worth of weapons,¹⁰ most of them from the United States. In other words, the West, particularly the USA, has taken it upon itself to decide for others what constitutes their legitimate defence needs and what is or is not permissible under the Western 'concept' of arms control.

In a follow up article, 'If not civilisations, what?',¹¹ Huntington says that from now on intercivilisational issues will replace intersuperpower issues as the top items on the international agenda. Among these issues, he argues, are human rights and democracy, with the USA pressing for and the Islamic and Confucian states failing to observe these rights. The following three examples will show that the West's perceived interest in encouraging respect for human rights and democracy in non-Western societies remains, as it did during the Cold War, an ideological and not an intercivilisational issue. The disregard for human rights in Indonesia and the massacre of the East Timorese by the Indonesian authorities are well documented and exposed by the media. Yet the Western governments have done little to press Indonesia to move towards a more liberal democratic regime, although the West's political influence, particularly US influence, in the

Indonesian government is undeniable. The United States went to war to bring down the brutal regime of the 'Hitler of Baghdad', yet the little kingdom President Bush was determined to 'liberate' and bring democracy to was and *remains* nothing more than a feudal fiefdom. Conversely, Hosni Mubarak's stick policy in respect of human rights and the execution of dissidents (14 in June and July 1993) has made no indentation on the United States' resolve to continue propping up the regime by giving it \$2.15 billion in aid a year. This despite the fact that such groups as Middle East Watch and the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights have reported that torture and detention without charge are common practice in Egypt.¹² Comments by some intellectuals on the American Right are perhaps more revealing about the extent to which the United States is interested in promoting human rights and democracy in the Third World.

How committed is the West to democracy?

It is worth quoting here at length a few of such commentators. The editor of *The Wall Street Journal*, Robert Bartley, argues that while the USA '... needs a human rights policy, applying it merely because we have access and leverage risks undermining, say, Egypt and Turkey, the bulwarks against an Islamic fundamentalism ... less susceptible to Western influence'.¹³ Kim Holmes, the vice-president of foreign policy and defence studies at the Heritage Foundation has this to say of the United States' attempts at frustrating human rights in the non-Western world:

The fact is, democracy and human rights are *not* the new organising order ... In deciding our foreign policy for a certain country, the question is not whether that country is democratic but whether it has a pro-Western foreign policy. In Asia [and elsewhere] you have countries that are pro-Western but not necessarily democratic. It is in our interest to support them. (emphasis in the original)¹⁴

And James Schlesinger, a former Secretary of Defense and Director of the CIA, is most eloquent and frank when he talks about the USA's lack of commitment to and interest in democracy and human rights in the Third World. He questions

whether we seriously desire to prescribe democracy as the proper form of government for other societies. Perhaps the issue is most clearly posed in the Islamic world. Do we seriously want to change the institutions in Saudi Arabia? The brief answer is no: over the years we have sought to preserve those institutions, sometimes in preference to more democratic forces coursing throughout the region.

After asking a further question, he points to the forces which he believes are more democratic, but which the United States cannot come to terms with.

Do we really want to press greater democratisation in Egypt? It would unlikely be beneficial either to our friend and ally, President Mubarak, or to Egyptian stability. Similar observations might be made about Tunisia, Morocco, or even Jordan. Indeed, in the Middle East the Islamic state that has most successfully embraced democratic processes is none other than Iran [the 'hotbed' of Islamic fundamentalism so feared in the West]. Yet few would suggest that we hold Iran in higher regard or that our relations are warmer than with other states in the region—to say nothing of whether we prefer a more democratic Iran than the Iran of the Shah.¹⁵

What is clear from the quotes cited above is that conflicts or cooperation among nations have their roots not in the similarity or otherwise of cultural identity but in common political and economic interests which may or may not exist between nations. This is the case with, on the one hand, cooperation between the USA and the Arabs states mentioned above, and on the other hand the hostility which exists between the USA and Iran. Obviously, common interests between nations change from time to time.

To Huntington, another obvious sign of the clash of civilisations is the issue of 'rising immigration from non-Western sources which is provoking rising concern in both Europe and America'. He is correct in arguing that such a phenomenon has caused great concern in Western Europe and the USA, but he is incorrect in his conclusion that the concern stems from cultural differences. Concern about non-Western immigrants contains strong economic and racial elements and has little to do with civilisational differences. Two examples will bear out this assertion. During the Afghan war in the 1980s, about two and a half million Afghan refugees went to Iran. Few of them were allowed to settle in Iran permanently, and so after the former Soviet Union left Afghanistan, the refugees were sent back—despite the fact that, from the point of view of Islamic civilisation and cultural backgrounds, the Afghans and the Iranians are in some respects as close to each other as Americans are to Europeans. The same can be said about the Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees in neighbouring Asian countries. They too have been received with a high degree of hostility and when possible are sent home, although in Huntington's classification of civilisations both the refugees and the host countries belong to the Confucian civilisation.

One of Huntington's most astonishing observations is his implied suggestion that non-Westerners cannot change and therefore are unable to adapt to a democratic system of government. He quotes the Census Bureau estimates that by 2050 the US population will be 23% Hispanic, 16% black and 10% Asian-American. In the past, he points out, millions of immigrants (he means Europeans) came to America and 'adapted to the prevailing European culture and enthusiastically [embraced] ... liberty, equality, democracy'. He then goes on to conclude that non-Western immigrants will be unable to adapt to the US system. 'If the United States becomes truly multicultural and pervaded with an eternal clash of civilisations, will it survive as a liberal democracy? Will the de-Westernisation of the United States, if it occurs, also mean its de-Americanisation?'¹⁶ This is nothing short of saying that non-Western peoples are 'genetically' immune to such Western concepts as democracy and liberty; which amounts to arguing that the very 'essence' of non-Westerners is unalterable. Edward Said calls this line of reasoning an 'expression of essentialisation',¹⁷ a notion which argues that Africans, Orientals, Europeans or Americans will never remain unaltered and their 'essence' unchanged. Huntington has thus assigned to the non-Westerners not a dynamic but a static identity, failing to account for the fact that some citizens of these 'other' civilisations have in the past successfully adapted to other Western concepts, i.e. fascism, Nazism and Communism. Indeed, was it not the West, led by the USA, which fought some countries of the Third World for adapting a Western concept—communism?

A reading of the literature of the post-communist era suggests that the basic

thrust of Huntington's contention on the clash of civilisations is part of a much more widely held view among US foreign policy and military strategists in the new world. According to this view, the USA's security is endangered by events in any part of the world, especially in the Third World, and therefore, America's leadership is crucial in safeguarding not only those interests but also in creating a new world order. In other words, the old perception of the bipolar ideological confrontation (minus the Soviet Union) appears to be still dominant in the US foreign policy elite and in some sections of the US academic community. Indeed, as Layne and Schwarz have observed, 'the Soviet Union's disappearance has seemingly removed the last barrier between Washington and the complete attainment of its world order aspirations'.¹⁸ The Soviet Union's demise has also allowed the foreign policy elites and military strategists (more of them later) and certain US academics to be more candid in articulating the assumptions that underpin their view of US strategy, whether under the banner of ideo-economic or civilisational war.

Steven David, professor of political science at the Johns Hopkins University, is another of the scholars who has been candid in articulating the view that in the post-Cold War world the Third World matters greatly because of its potential threat to the USA's security and its global interests. In 'Why the Third World still matters', he argues that although the aggregate threat to the United States from the Third World is less than it was when the Soviet Union existed, 'it is still far greater than asserted by those who dismiss the Third World as inconsequential'.¹⁹ Central to his argument is that the Third World states, and he appears to make no exception, essentially have an innate inclination for war. 'Because Third World cultures differ from those of the West, deterring Third World states from engaging in a war is more difficult', presumably than deterring the former Soviet Union which, notwithstanding its communist ideology, was part of Western culture and therefore less disposed towards war. David believes that non-Western civilisations have a social and religious belief system that drives them to war. 'The ideologies', he says, 'of many Third World states are more supportive of war than ideological beliefs held elsewhere ... [Western] countries have assimilated the social ideas and attitudes of peace. In the Third World, however, ideologically driven religious, ethnic, and political hatreds persist. Third World states openly seek the destruction of their neighbours, as seen in Arab calls for the elimination of Israel, Indonesia's brutal suppression of East Timor, and Iraq's attempted incorporation of Kuwait' (p 138). The historical backgrounds to and the West's role, both direct and indirect, in these wars do not seem to matter to David. The West's role in conflicts in Angola, Somalia, Ethiopia, Afghanistan and the Iran-Iraq war in the 1970s and the 1980s is now well documented and needs no elaboration here.

Unlike Western democracies, Third World states, he argues, are more likely to go to war because 'public support for war is greater in the Third World than elsewhere' (p 136). Does it mean that compared with the rest of humankind the peoples of the Third World are more for war because they are immune to the pain, suffering, loss of life and destruction of their cities and villages that war brings upon them? This kind of language and reasoning are reminiscent of the Cold War, which portrayed the Russians as almost devoid of human qualities.

Does not David's language reveal his intention to dehumanise and demonise the non-Westerners?

The dehumanisation process

The dehumanisation of non-Western cultures on the one hand and the elevation of Western cultures on the other is an old and established mechanism of cultural domination. As Noam Chomsky has correctly observed, '... it is an absolute requirement for the Western system of ideology that a vast gulf be established between the civilised West, with traditional commitment to human dignity, liberty, and self-determination, and the barbaric brutality of those who for some reason—perhaps defective genes—fail to appreciate the depth of this historic commitment ...'²⁰ It is not only that Western culture is superior to other cultures, according to David; it is that 'the nature of the Third World ...' (pp 138, 149) makes it impossible for the peoples of the Third World to commit themselves to such Western values as peace and not war. For him, the West's well documented role in the wars in the Third World in the past 45 years appears irrelevant. This perceived innate destructive power of the Third World countries, coupled with their increasing ability 'to strike out at the United States and its Western allies' is, to David, no longer a matter of conjecture, considering that these countries are 'busily acquiring huge amounts of arms, some of which are equal to the best in the arsenals of the great powers' (p 147).

To accept David's dire warning of the danger of the Third World to the West is to believe that the West has developed a self-destructive tendency, for, as has already been pointed out, it is the West that has provided, and continues to provide, the Third World with almost all its destructive weapons. Why? essentially because (a) the sale of arms to the Third World is a lucrative business for multinational corporations and creates jobs for workers in the West; (b) the sale of arms is an important component of the West's, especially of the USA's, foreign policy, for it makes the recipient states dependent on the West for their own national security; and (c) the sale of arms opens new markets for other Western products and services, and to cultural penetration.

David goes on to argue that in the culture and religion of the Third World, 'economic logic' and economic imperatives count for little. The empirical evidence he gives in support of his assertion is that a group of religious extremists took over the Grand Mosque in Saudi Arabia in 1979 to overthrow the government because of the Saudi ruling family's policy of oil production and sale to the West. 'To assume that their [the religious extremists'] cultural and religious beliefs would have no effect on economic behaviour is as dangerous as it is foolhardy' (p 150). The fact is that the taking over of the Grand Mosque had little to do with the sale of oil to the West but much to do with the repression of and, yes, the almost total political dependency of the Saudi family on the USA. Had the groups succeeded in taking over the government, they may have increased the price of oil but that would not have meant that their religion and culture were incompatible with 'economic logic' and market economy, a concept which is recognised in Islam. Iran's case would support that argument and defy David's own logic. Ruled by perceived 'religious extremists' and faced with

economic difficulties in recent years (mostly because of the eight-year war with Iraq), Iran has in recent years been trying hard to increase oil production and sales to the world market. Its insistence that the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) should decrease oil production in order to increase oil prices is dictated more by economic logic than by religious belief. Also, Iraq's attempt to incorporate Kuwait had little to do with the culture and religion of the Iraqis but much to do with economic logic, at least in their view. Put simply, Saddam Hussein thought, admittedly wrongly, that by incorporating Kuwait he could sell more oil to pay for the reconstruction of war-torn Iraq. To him, that seemed 'logical' enough, economically speaking.

It is not only that the Third World could put the Western world at risk by its lack of economic logic, but in the post-Cold War era it can also threaten the USA with nuclear weapons, David warns us. He argues that although the USA and the former Soviet Union had some intense moments in their relations during the Cold War, they did not use nuclear weapons, because they 'never experienced the degree of hostility that characterises many Third World countries ... [who do not] behave essentially like the existing nuclear powers', (pp. 151–2) meaning like the West. David rejects the suggestion by author Kenneth Waltz that Third World leaders are rational enough not to use nuclear weapons against the West, even though they may recognise the very high price they would pay for doing so. Thus, in David's view, even the rational people in non-Western societies are 'irrational by Western standards' (p 151), ready to go ahead and use nuclear weapons and bring destruction upon themselves, because of their 'hatred' of the West.

To David, Huntington and other scholars of their ilk, the salient characteristics of the Third World are hatred, irrationality, religious extremism, terrorism, natural inclination towards war, etc. As John Esposito observes, the defeat of communism has created a 'threat vacuum' 'that has given rise to a search for new enemies ... a new Comintern led by "religious Stalinists" posed to challenge the free world'.²¹ While some scholars are trying to construct a conceptual framework for articulating the perceived dangers facing Western civilisation in the post-communist world, the military are also busy preparing for the possibility of physical confrontation between Western and non-Western civilisations.

For example, the Pentagon's draft of its *Defense Planning Guidance for the Fiscal Years 1994–1999* asserted that, to ensure a favourable international environment, the USA must prevent other states 'from challenging our leadership or seeking to overturn the established political and economic order [and] must maintain the mechanisms for deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger or global role'. But the *Guidance* does not rest there, for it argues that the United States 'will retain the preeminent responsibility for addressing selectively those wrongs which threaten not only our interests but those of our allies or friends, or which could seriously unsettle international relations'.²² Although phrased a little differently, we would not be off the mark to argue that the basic assumption of defence planning for the 1990s is remarkably similar to the assumptions presented in NSC-68, the famous National Security Council memorandum on the Soviet menace in 1950: 'Our free society, confronted by a threat to its basic values, naturally will take such action,

including the use of military force, as may be required to protect those values. The integrity of our system will not be jeopardised by any measures, covert or overt, violent or non-violent, which serve the purpose of frustrating the Kremlin design ...'

Having frustrated the Kremlin design, the USA is now embarking on a new crusade. General Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under the Bush administration, has argued that the end of the Cold War has offered the USA the opportunity to take up its new responsibility. His exact words are worth quoting here: 'The last best hope on earth [the USA] has no other choice. We must lead. We are obligated to lead ... We cannot lead without our armed forces.'²³ It is, of course, the unstated 'other' civilisations that General Powell believes the United States must lead [read fight with] now that the 'communist hordes' (his words) are defeated. Dick Cheney and Les Aspin, Defense Secretaries under the Bush and Clinton administrations respectively, have echoed similar sentiments to that of General Powell, arguing that in the 1990s and beyond the threat to Western security and economic interests comes from the Third World,²⁴ comprising, of course, the Muslim and Confucian civilisations. The call to protect the USA's economic interests is invoked to justify a post-Cold War US military presence in the Third World and military intervention in regional conflicts. The strategy dictates that the USA be prepared to risk war, if necessary, to ensure that the markets and raw material sources with which it is linked are not closed. In the words of Layne and Schwarz, the United States 'has embraced the proposition that wars (or at least continuous preparations for war) are necessary for the American economy to prosper'.²⁵ General Powell's and others' warnings of potential danger arising from the Third World are not dissimilar to the myths propagated in the past by the military elites. As Stephen Evera has argued:

Militaries have a tendency to exaggerate the power of the offence relative to the defense, and the ease of conquest among states. It bolsters arguments that larger forces are needed to defend against aggression, and supports arguments for the offensive military doctrines that militaries strongly prefer. Military strategists also exaggerate the hostility of other states, painting them as malevolent and aggressive. This bolsters the military's case for large budgets by exaggerating the likelihood of war, but also cause war by bolstering arguments that enemies should be forestalled by launching preemptive or preventive war.²⁶

It seems that the US stress on its military might and the demise of the former Soviet Union which brought so much euphoria in the West has not been matched by similar feelings of joy in the Third World. The Prime Minister of Malaysia, Mohammad Mahathir, has perhaps echoed the fears and sentiments of Third World countries in the post-Cold War world when he told the nonaligned nations meeting in Caracas on 27 November 1991: 'Lamentably, these changes [the new world order] do not augur well for the countries of the developing South ... Indeed, the new unipolar world is fraught with dangers of a return to the old dominance of the powerful over the weak ... A new world order is propounded seemingly to legitimise interference in the affairs of independent nations.'²⁷ Unlike the Western world, the Third World would seem to have little

to celebrate with the ending of the Cold War. The little bargaining power and leverage that the Third World countries had during the superpowers' rivalry has diminished. Not only that, they are now seen as a potential threat to the security of the West and to Western civilisation in general. The 'manufactured enemy' threat is now fought under the banner of the clash of civilisations.

The construction of the thesis that in post-communism the West is confronted by a hostile non-Western world which seeks to undermine the international world order is intellectually dishonest and unsustainable. The non-West has neither the financial capacity nor technological capability to confront the West, assuming that it was inclined to do so. Based on its recent experience (of the 125 major conflicts which flared up in the Third World during the Cold War, the West was involved in 79% of cases²⁸), it knows that a confrontation between the West and non-West will be very costly. The Persian Gulf war of 1991 showed how costly such a confrontation can be to the Third World countries. There is now sufficient evidence to support the argument that the superpowers' rivalry in the Third World has cost the latter dearly in terms of material loss and loss of human lives. A significant effect of these wars was that the newly and not so newly independent Third World countries had little opportunity to develop their economies or create democratic political institutions. What is being argued here is that it is not the Third World, or Huntington's Islamic and Confucian civilisations, which are bent on confronting the West—unless we interpret the struggle by the Third World countries for economic and political independence as a threat to the interests and security of the West. However, if the Western and the non-Western worlds do confront each other in coming years, this will be an economic and ideological conflict and not a civilisational conflict.

Should a civilisational 'cold war', let alone a 'hot war', develop between the West and the non-West, the former, more specifically the USA, will find it much more costly and harder to win. Because the non-West is not a monolithic, unified bloc, as was the communist bloc, Washington will be facing, geographically speaking, a much wider area and larger populations with diverse cultures and religious beliefs—even within the Islamic and Confucian civilisations—than it faced when fighting communism. For example, while Indonesia, Algeria, Iran and Uzbekistan belong to the Islamic civilisation, their political systems and religious complexions are vastly different. The same can be said about the countries which have their roots in the Confucian civilisation. Also, although the USA has won the Cold War, economically it is now in a considerably weaker position than after the end of World War II, when it was rich enough to pay for the reconstruction of much of Europe. Furthermore, since the end of the Cold War there has been a fragmentation of the old US-European coalitions, and without a superpower adversary to exploit global turmoil, European allies and even Third World clients will not be so accommodating in making 'the world safe for America'.

Conclusion

Much of the literature produced in the past few years about the Third World seems to suggest that, with the end of the Cold War and the 'triumph' of

capitalism, the USA as the leader of the Western world is now confronted by a hostile non-West, comprising mainly the Islamic and Confucian civilisations. Proponents of this thesis maintain that, unlike the old ideological and economic conflict between capitalism and communism, the new conflict will be between different civilisations. In this article we have argued that contrary to Huntington's thesis, the conflict will still be fought on ideological and economic grounds. In fact, what is called the 'new' conflict between the United States and the Third World is hardly new. Washington's present foreign policy is similar to what it set out to pursue at the end of World War II. There is much truth in Layne's and Schwarz's argument that after the end of the war Washington was committed to 'an active internationalist agenda and would have pursued it even if the Soviet Union had not emerged as a geopolitical and ideological rival'.²⁹ The main objectives set out in NSC68, the 1950 National Security Council document, continue to govern US foreign policy even in the post-Cold War era. The NSC68 document confirms that America's strategy is '... one designed to foster a world environment in which the American system can survive and flourish ... [and] that the policy of attempting to develop a healthy international community [was] a policy which we would probably pursue even if there were no Soviet threat'. This remains true today. US post-Cold War foreign policy in the Persian Gulf war, its 'economic cold war' with Japan, the political confrontation with North Korea over its alleged development of a nuclear capability, and the continuing characterisation of Muslim revivalists as fanatics, fundamentalists, lunatics, terrorists, etc. are all essentially a continuation of an active internationalist agenda of the post-World War II era, which was designed to establish US hegemony over the rest of the world. Today's conflict between the West and the non-West is as much an ideological and economic one as was the conflict between communism and capitalism. Huntington's thesis of the clash of civilisations is useful only insofar as it is a new name for the old Cold War. The new 'cold war', however, may prove much more difficult to win.

Notes

¹ See Samuel P. Huntington, 'The clash of civilisations?' *Foreign Affairs*, 72(3), 1993, pp. 22-49. All quotations used here are from Huntington's article, except where otherwise indicated.

² Steven R. David, 'Why the Third World still matters', *International Security*, 17(3), 1992/93, pp. 127-159; Anthony Lake, 'Confronting backlash states', *Foreign Affairs*, 73(2), 1994, pp. 45-55; and Charles Krauthammer, 'The unipolar movement', *Foreign Affairs*, 70(1), 1990/91, pp. 23-33.

³ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, London: Vintage, 1994, p. 351. Said also quotes V. G. Kiernan as saying, 'From the World War onward, intellectuals were drawn into public activities whose ultimate dynamo was the military-industrial complex. They took part in strategic planning, and the development of scientific warfare and counter-insurgency, were flatteringly invited to the White House, and awarded presidents immense due royalty ...' pp. 365-366.

⁴ James Dorsey, 'The growing entente between Armenia and Iran', *Middle East International*, 439, pp. 1718.

⁵ See Colin L. Powell, 'US forces: challenges ahead', *Foreign Affairs*, 72(5), 1992/93, p. 35. General Powell was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under the Bush administration, and also for a short while under the Clinton administration.

⁶ See James A. Bill, 'The United States and Iran: mutual mythologies', *Middle East Policy*, 11(3), 1993, p. 103.

⁷ Peter J. Schraeder, 'It's the Third World stupid: why the Third World should be the priority of the Clinton administration', *Third World Quarterly*, 14(2), 1993, p. 217.

⁸ Krauthammer, 'The unipolar movement', pp. 31-32.

- ¹ See Kenneth R. Timmerman, *The Death Lobby. How the West Armed Iraq*, New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1991.
- ² See Faeed Mohamedi, 'Saudi economy: a few years till Doomsday', *Middle East Report*, 23(6), 1993, p. 16.
- ³ Samuel P. Huntington, 'If not civilisations, what? Paradigms of the post Cold War world', *Foreign Affairs*, 72(5), 1993.
- ⁴ Stanley Reed, 'The battle for Egypt', *Foreign Affairs*, 72(4), 1993, p. 103.
- ⁵ Robert I. Bartley, 'The case for optimism—The West should believe in itself', *Foreign Affairs*, 72(4), 1993, p. 18.
- ⁶ Kim Holmes, 'Is there a doctrine in the house?', *Harper's* 288(1724), January 1994, p. 62.
- ⁷ James R. Schlesinger, 'Quest for a post Cold War foreign policy', *Foreign Affairs*, 72(1), 1993, p. 20.
- ⁸ Huntington, 'If not civilisations, what?' p. 190.
- ⁹ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, London: Vintage, 1994, p. 376.
- ¹⁰ See Christopher Layne & Benjamin Schwarz, 'American hegemony: without an enemy', *Foreign Policy*, 92, 1993, p. 9.
- ¹¹ See David, 'Why the Third World still matters' p. 129.
- ¹² See Noam Chomsky, *Towards a New Cold War: Essays on the Current Crisis and How We Got There*, London: Sinclair Browne, 1992, p. 85.
- ¹³ See John F. Esposito, 'Political Islam: beyond the green menace', *Current History*, 93(579), 1994, p. 19.
- ¹⁴ Quoted in *Foreign Policy*, 92, 1993, pp. 9–10.
- ¹⁵ Colin F. Powell, 'US forces', p. 33.
- ¹⁶ For Dick Cheney's comments see Krauthammer, 'The unipolar movement', p. 30. For Les Aspin comments see Alan Tonelson, 'Superpower without a sword', *Foreign Affairs*, 72(3), 1993, p. 169.
- ¹⁷ Layne & Schwarz, 'American hegemony', p. 13.
- ¹⁸ See Stephen Van Evera, 'Primed for peace' in Sean M. Lynn Jones, (ed) *The Cold War and After*, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1991, p. 205.
- ¹⁹ Cited in Deepa Ollapally, 'The South looks North: the Third World in the New World Order', *Current History*, 92(573), 1993, p. 175.
- ²⁰ See Noam Chomsky, *On Power and Ideology*, Boston, MA: South End Press, 1987, p. 24.
- ²¹ Layne & Schwarz, 'American hegemony', p. 5.

Review of African Political Economy

EDITORS

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Review of African Political Economy (ROAPE) is published quarterly by Carfax Publishing Company for the ROAPE international editorial collective. *ROAPE* is a fully refereed journal covering all aspects of African political economy. *ROAPE* has always involved the readership in shaping the journal's coverage, welcoming contributions from grass roots organisations, women's organisations, trade unions and political groups. The journal is unique in the comprehensiveness of its bibliographic referencing, information monitoring, statistical documentation and coverage of work-in-progress.

1995 - Volume 22 (4 issues). ISSN 0305-6244.

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Civilisational conflict? looking for cultural enemies

JACINTA O'HAGAN

Samuel Huntington's essay 'The clash of civilizations?'¹ has stimulated debate, both in academic circles and within the corridors of power.² It has provoked these communities into thinking about the structure of world politics as something consisting of entities other than just nation-states. It raises issues of the relevance of civilisations and their cultures in world politics. This is to be welcomed. It is a dimension which has been largely neglected in the main body of literature on international relations. However, there is cause to be wary of the way in which Huntington has employed the notions of inter-civilisational interaction in his essay. There is a danger that his assumptions and conclusions, rather than creating a path into mainstream International Relations for these concerns, may in fact alienate many people from taking them seriously and allowing them the consideration which they warrant in international studies. Professor Huntington has suggested that his analysis of inter-civilisational relations presents a new paradigm to students of international relations.³ I would suggest that, rather than presenting the field with a new paradigm, his essay reinforces traditional perceptions of the structure of international relations as predominantly conflictual.

The debate which his essay has stimulated is also interesting in the way that it outlines positions on the post-Cold War world and attitudes to the West.⁴ The debate itself points to interesting and divergent lines of thought in the International Relations community. It provides academics with an opportunity to consider some of the broader issues of cultural and civilisational interactions which are currently arousing attention in international circles, as demonstrated by exchanges on issues such as human rights, including labour rights, the environment and social cohesion. This article discusses some of the key points of Professor Huntington's essay, and of some of the responses it has provoked. It uses this discussion as a vehicle to reflect on the role of civilisations in international relations. It suggests that civilisational identity is a powerful force in world politics. However, to view inter-civilisational relations as primarily relations of conflict, and to accept unquestioningly the rhetoric of inter-civilisational conflict can be misleading and unnecessarily narrows our understanding of the significance of inter-civilisational relations for international affairs.

The velvet curtain

The key element of Huntington's thesis is that in the post-Cold War world civilisations will replace ideology as the fundamental source of conflict:

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The fault lines between civilizations are replacing the political and ideological boundaries of the Cold War as flash points of crisis and bloodshed. The 'Velvet Curtain' of culture is falling to replace the 'Iron Curtain' of ideology.⁵

Why is this? Huntington provides six reasons to justify his thesis. The core reason is difference. Different cultures in close proximity will conflict because they hold different views and values. Technology is making the world smaller, placing civilisations in greater relative proximity thus accentuating their sense of difference;⁶ he points to the forces of modernisation weakening the authority of the nation-state, with the forces of religion taking the place of national identity; he discusses the indigenisation of non-Western elites and the consequent turning away from Westernisation which is occurring in many non-Western societies; he discusses the immutability of ethnic and religious identities which further accentuate difference, and finally, Huntington points to the growth of economic regionalism contributing to the cohesiveness of various civilisational groups, or what Huntington at a later point calls 'kin-country solidarity'.⁷

The West and the rest

It becomes evident that in the context of the forthcoming clashes, Huntington's main preoccupation is the position and role of the West and its continued pre-eminence in modern international society, a pre-eminence which Huntington obviously sees as threatened, but threatened not so much from forces within as from those without. One of the chief enemies of the West upon whom the paper focuses is Islam, a civilisation which is portrayed as antagonistic to the West for many centuries. Its continuing challenge is seen as manifested in the Gulf war and Islamic 'fundamentalism', and in what Huntington describes as the Confucian Islamic connection, which is in essence a conspiracy between two disgruntled cultures to undermine the power of the West through arms proliferation.⁸

In his analysis, Huntington acknowledges that the West has dominated and used the international system to enhance its own position and promote its values and interests, often promoting these as universal values, values that he acknowledges do not always easily translate into other cultures.⁹ However, in the latter stages of the essay Huntington slips from the position of disinterested analyst to that of Adviser to the Prince, in suggesting ways in which the West can continue to protect its own position and, in the long run, guard world peace and stability.¹⁰ The focus of Huntington's essay is less on exploring the broader dimensions of the significance of inter-civilisational relations for international affairs, and more on presenting civilisations as new units of conflict and entities that will become the new enemies of the West in the post-Cold War world.

The language of despair

Huntington's vision of the New World Order is not a cheerful one. His essay is replete with the language of gloom and doom, of violence and bloody confrontation, fault lines and difference, torn countries and renegades. A dark picture is

painted in which the reader is always drawn back to the inevitability of conflict, the immutability of difference and a doomsday scenario of a third world war fought along the fault lines and fissures of culture. This seems at odds with the image of civilisation which the author describes. In describing civilisation, he acknowledges it as a fluid and dynamic entity:

Civilizations are dynamic, they rise and fall, they divide and merge ... People can and do redefine their identities and as a result, the composition and boundaries of civilisations change.¹¹

But the picture of civilisations which is painted in the main body of the essay accentuates differences between civilisations, and the intractability of such differences which the forces of the post-Cold War world are imposing. It is an image which conveys little sense of dynamism or interaction other than violent interaction. Despite the fact that Huntington acknowledges that '[d]ifferences do not always mean conflict, and conflict does not necessarily mean violence',¹² there is little consideration given in his essay to any form of interaction other than conflict.

The fault lines of civilisations

Huntington's argument implies that, henceforth, the main fault lines in world politics will be those between civilisations. He places this into the context of the history of strife in the modern world progressing from conflicts between princes for power to conflicts between nations, followed by the battle of ideologies. The role of the nation-state, he argues, has been weakened by modernisation and social change. The world will continue to comprise 'overlapping groupings of states', but these groupings will be based now on common civilisational identities rather than common ideological beliefs.¹³ It therefore appears that the role of the state in Huntington's analysis will be that of an agent of civilisational conflict.

A number of commentators, including Fouad Ajami and Albert Weeks, dispute the priority which Huntington attaches to the role of civilisations as actors in international politics, contending that the political organisation of the state remains the central dynamic entity.¹⁴ Ajami has criticised Huntington for his underestimation of the extent to which the concept of the state, along with the forces of modernisation and secularism, has been internalised throughout the world. He has admonished Huntington for assigning too much weight to the revival of fundamentalist religions, or 'detours into tradition' and underestimating the 'slyness of states', cynically driven today by the pull of economics rather than utopias, '... en want Sony, not soil,' he quotes. The interests of states remain primary. 'Civilizations do not control states, states control civilizations ... We remain in a world of self-help. The solitude of states continues.'¹⁵

Huntington is not arguing that civilisations will replace states as political organisations. He would, no doubt, acknowledge that civilisations are a very different form of political community.¹⁶ However, Ajami and Huntington have more in common than immediately meets the eye. What both parties to this debate implicitly accept is the essentially conflictual nature of the international

system. Huntington presents civilisations as the new focus of this conflict, replacing states or ideological groupings as units of conflict. This allows little space for consideration of *how* civilisational identities may reach across frontiers to shape values, norms and ideas, or how the interaction of civilisations can also produce positive and dynamic effects.

Huntington does raise important questions with regard to civilisations as the source of conflict. He attributes conflict to different values and views held in increasingly close proximity, arguing that differences within civilisational groups are less likely to lead to violent conflict.¹⁷ Not surprisingly, most commentators have debated with Huntington on only a few of the most prominent of the wide range of examples he cites. In fact, one of the difficulties with this essay is that its range is so sweeping and general that it often appears to lack substance. Little hard evidence is provided to back up the examples cited, his comments, consequently, become little more than speculative observations. Huntington's analysis, asserts Ajami, is devoid of complications and ambiguities, divisions between civilisations become too clear-cut.¹⁸ Huntington observes the existence of ethnic, racial or religious differences in certain conflicts, but actually tells us little about the causes of conflicts, conflicts whose origins are often rooted firmly in economic or political issues. The factors which Huntington outlines at the outset of the essay as the sources of civilisational conflict demonstrate some interesting opinions on the pressures acting on world politics today, but the link established between cause and effect is tenuous. This is illustrated by the essay's treatment of the Gulf war and the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia.¹⁹

In both disputes, Huntington argues that one can trace the emergence of the 'kin-country' syndrome in which states will rally to their civilisational brethren. Huntington notes the efforts by Saddam Hussein during the Gulf war to appeal to Pan-Islamic solidarity, arguing that while only a few Arab governments publicly supported Iraq (most notably Iraq's vulnerable neighbour Jordan), Hussein found much support among Arab elites, the Arab publics and Islamic fundamentalists. He also notes the declining active support of the Arab governments for continuing pressure on Iraq in 1992 and 1993. With regard to the Yugoslavian conflict, a conflict which is described as falling along the ancient fault lines between Western, Orthodox and Islamic civilisations in Europe, Huntington argues that leading actors in Western civilisations rallied behind their co-religionists along kin-country lines, the West showing greater sympathy towards Catholic Croatia, Russia supporting Slavic Serbia, and Islamic countries increasingly disgruntled at the West's failure to protect the Muslim population of Bosnia.

Huntington's analysis of both conflicts has been roundly criticised by commentators for largely swallowing the rhetoric of the conflicts which has cloaked the very real power interests of the main protagonists. Both Fouad Ajami and Jeane Kirkpatrick have argued that the Gulf war was fought for geopolitical reasons which transcended cultural difference. As Ajami has argued:

if there was a campaign that laid bare the interests of states, the lengths to which they will go to restore a tolerable balance of power in a place that matters, this was it.²⁰

the Iraqi regime was one of the most secular in the region, it had fought a 9-year war against the revolutionary Islamic Iranian state. One of the staunchest allies of the anti-Iraq coalition was, of course, one of the most orthodox Islamic regimes in the region, Saudi Arabia. In contrast to Huntington, Ghassan Saleme has offered an interesting analysis of the consequences of the Gulf war for the politics of the Middle East region, observing that the defeat of the largely secular Iraqi regime strengthened the appetite of Iraq's radical Islamic neighbour and rival, Iran, for regional leadership. 'Hence the Arab governments were reluctant to condone let alone support new Western military attacks on Iraq in January 1993'.²¹

The Gulf war is certainly a case in which the appeal of civilisational alliances one does not help us understand fully the *source* or *course* of conflict. It must be recognised that the dispute involved the invasion of one Arab state by another Arab state, and that the parties who became involved lined up on the grounds of interests, be these interests in oil, territory, the maintenance of the balance of power in the region or the protection of international principles. The positions adopted by other Middle Eastern states were influenced by a complex of factors, which involved domestic, regional and international considerations, including Saddam Hussein's appeal to Pan-Arabism.²² Saddam Hussein's appeal to the rhetoric of civilisational identity as a powerful force is important to note. While it cloaked the more tangible causes of the dispute, it sought to escalate the conflict to a different level, to present cultural difference as the primary source of conflict in a bid to win broader support.

Huntington has similarly been criticised for his interpretation of the break-up of Yugoslavia and the war in Bosnia as primarily instances of inter-civilisational conflict. A number of commentators have stressed the degree to which these disputes are based on modern rather than mediaeval sources of conflict.²³ William Pfaff, for instance, has traced the origins of the disputes not to 14th century cultural and ethnic divides but to twentieth century power politics, chiefly a political struggle between Serbs and Croats. 'Its supposedly primordial hatreds are a twentieth century phenomenon.'²⁴ He has argued that the world should not be taken in by the assertions of the impossibility of coexistence of the ethnically divided people of the Balkans. The differences which exist are differences of history rather than physical or anthropological racial differences.²⁵ Pfaff also stresses the fact that linguistically and ethnically the people of the former Yugoslavia have much in common:

The cruel genius of Slobodan Milosovic and Franjo Tudjman ... was to make their bids for power into grand civilizational undertakings—the ramparts of the Enlightenment defended against Islam or, in Tudjman's case, against the heirs of the Slavic-Orthodox faith. Differences had to be magnified.²⁶

There is then, a danger of misreading these conflicts if they are simply seen as continuation of ancient battles. Kirkpatrick has warned against viewing the Bosnian conflict in particular as a struggle of the West versus Islam.

(M)ost governments of predominantly Muslim states have been reluctant to treat the Bosnian conflict as a religious war. The Bosnian government has resisted any temptation to present the problem as Islam versus the Judeo-Christian world.²⁷

Neither the Gulf nor the Yugoslavian conflict is simply a battle based on differences of religion, ethnicity or civilisation. Both have their roots in tangible political or economic causes. To see such disputes caused by intractable difference may inhibit their settlement. Pfaff warns that if tangible conflicts over economic or political issues are interpreted as collisions of civilisations, they are transferred from the realm of the negotiable and the solvable into that of the perpetual, unsolvable conflict.²⁸ At the same time we should note that the appeal to civilisational identity, particularly in the wake of ongoing tensions, can be a powerful one. This makes it increasingly important for us to distinguish between the rhetoric of conflict and the reality of the causes of such struggles. One of the dangers, of course, is that in such situations the rhetoric, for instance the rhetoric of the inability of peoples who see themselves as culturally distinct to coexist peacefully, can become the reality, a point which Pfaff makes with regard to the course of events in the former Yugoslavia.²⁹ While we should not minimise the importance of the appeal to civilisational identity, it would be misleading simply to see civilisational difference as the cause of conflict. As Chandra Muzaffar has observed of Huntington's analysis in this paper, '(i)n his eagerness to emphasise civilizational diversity, he ignores the complex web of causes which invariably influences any conflict'.³⁰ Huntington's essay does not fully engage in distinguishing the rhetoric of civilisations from the tangible causes of conflict.

In both his initial essay, and in his Response to his critics, Huntington asserts that conflicts are more likely to occur *between* civilisations than *within* civilisations. Anyone who wishes to reflect on the legacies of numerous civil wars, such as the recent terrible conflict in Rwanda or strife in Somalia, may wish to query this contention. Of course the origins of the two catastrophic world wars this century both stemmed from conflicts within the West. Indeed, one might even describe the ideological battles of the Cold War as essentially an intra-Western conflict, given that both systems of thought stemmed very much from within the Western intellectual tradition. Jeane Kirkpatrick pursues this issue of the continuing significance of intra-civilisational conflict. She points out, for instance that: whilst differences indubitably exist between the Muslim and Judeo-Christian civilizations, the most explosive differences involving Muslims are found within the Muslim world.³¹

To simply identify differences between parties in conflict does not necessarily help us to understand the causes of conflict. It may even, in fact, exacerbate conflict. It is, therefore, crucial to be wary of the language of irreconcilable differences between different civilisational groups. This makes the understanding of the nature and dynamics of relationships between different civilisations all the more important.

Civilisations in conflict: looking for enemies?

This brings us back to the preoccupation of Huntington's essay with *conflict* in relationships between different civilisations. From the outset, he focuses on the 'history of conflict', interaction *between* civilisations rapidly narrows in focus to

become conflict. Huntington effectively only cites examples of civilisations engaged in strife. In fact, one of the few instances of cooperation between civilisations which is discussed is the 'Confucian-Islamic connection', a relationship portrayed as something of a conspiracy against the West! Muzaffar points out that:

By overplaying the 'clash of civilizations' dimension, Huntington has, willy-nilly, ignored the creative constructive interaction and engagement between civilizations. This is a very much more perennial, more constant feature of civilization than conflict *per se*.³²

As Donald Puchala has observed, other agents of civilisational encounters exist in addition to warring soldiers. These include, for instance, businessmen and women, artisans, scholars and diplomats, pilgrims, tourists and journalists.³³ Muzaffar reminds us that there have been constructive and cooperative dimensions to relations between the West and Islam. He notes that Islam provided the foundations for the growth of mathematics, the sciences, architecture and agriculture in mediaeval Europe. Likewise, Adda Bozeman traces the peaceful exchanges of scholarship and ideas which gave rise to the spread of Buddhism in China.³⁴ These are just a few demonstrations of the interaction of different cultures and civilisations through such agencies as trade or the exchange of ideas. Their impact may be gradual and occur over a long period of time. They may not be as dramatic as bloody conflict but are surely as significant. This is not to deny the occurrence and significance of violent interaction, but simply to try to present inter-civilisational interaction in a more balanced light. A deeper awareness of the multi-dimensional nature of encounters between civilisations can be found in the work of authors such as Toynbee, McNeill, Braudel and Wallerstein.³⁵ McNeill, for instance, argued that his noted work, *The Rise of the West*:

assumes that separate civilizations form real and important groupings and that their interaction constitutes the main theme of world history.

and furthermore:

that the principal factor promoting historically significant change is contact with strangers possessing new and unfamiliar skills.³⁶

McNeill's perspective does not imply that such encounters are not without their own traumas or difficulties, but he provides us with a much broader view on the range of encounters which may occur.³⁷

Huntington's focus on conflict at the expense of cooperation parallels his focus on difference at the expense of commonality between civilisations. This is reflected in the attitude to some of the forces of change in the international environment which are evident in this essay. Huntington points out that the world is becoming a smaller place. Advances in technology, particularly transport and communications, are eradicating the 'tyranny of distance'. Peoples of the world are now more familiar with, and affected by each other. For Huntington, these increased interactions 'intensify civilization consciousness and awareness of differences between civilizations and commonalities within

civilizations'. This in turn 'invigorates differences and animosities'.³⁸ No consideration is given to the other side of the coin, the extent to which increased interaction can also make peoples of different civilisations aware of common interests and common concerns. Take, for example, the growth of transnational movements such as the environmental movement or increased communications between indigenous peoples of the world, coming together to discuss common problems. In areas such as human rights, transnational linkages have enhanced awareness of common concerns and, in some instances, provided support and assistance across national frontiers.³⁹ In addition, increased interaction can create new bonds between different civilisations, creating shared interests, perhaps even a degree of interdependence. This point is reflected in Robert Bartley's commentary on 'The clash of civilizations?' Bartley is decidedly more optimistic than Huntington with regard to the impact of increased interaction. He sees communications, for instance, as a powerful force towards world integration. In a sense, Bartley views these as forces of enlightenment. An out-and-out liberal, Bartley sees a profound linkage between the forces of economic development and the emergence of democracy and human rights.

economic development leads to demands for democracy and individual autonomy;
instant worldwide communications reduces the power of oppressive governments;
the spread of democratic states diminishes the potential for conflict.⁴⁰

The processes of economic regionalism which Huntington fears as forces which will reinforce civilisational consciousness, are welcomed by Bartley as progressive, as forces that will reduce friction in the world. Similarly, in contrast to Huntington's assertion that regionalism is predominantly an intra-civilisational phenomenon, Muzaffar points out that one of the most successful examples of a regional grouping forging common interest is the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), an organisation which, encompassing four civilisations, has successfully straddled cultural divisions.⁴¹

In considering the consequences of the world becoming more of a global village, it may be more accurate to point out that the forces of globalisation can both make us more aware of our own identities in contrasting our culture to that of other civilisations, while simultaneously generating shared interests, ideas and values. These are not always easy to reconcile. (Is the expansion of Western pop and consumer culture necessarily a good thing for instance?) But as Liu Binyan comments, no culture is an island. He argues that '(f)or most countries the task is not to demarcate civilizations but to mix and meld them' in a search for economic and political well-being.⁴² Likewise, in considering the idea of 'creative engagement', Muzaffar argues that:

Civilizations adapt and adjust to one another. Absorption and synthesis, integration and assimilation are enduring characteristics in the interaction among civilizations.⁴³

Here we begin to enter into the complex area of cultural interchange. In some ways, Huntington and some of his commentators have accepted perhaps too readily what may be something of a false dichotomy between modernism (represented by Western culture) and tradition (represented by the reaction to it). In reality, the divisions are rarely so clear-cut. Ajami comments that Hunting-

ton's essay portrays civilisations as hermetically sealed entities 'whole and intact, watertight under an eternal sky',⁴⁴ this despite Huntington's acknowledgement of civilisations as dynamic entities. Civilisations are not only dynamic in the sense that they rise and fall, they also grow and change through interaction with each other. Therefore 'the West' of today is not necessarily 'the West' of fifty or one hundred years ago any more than Confucian civilisations exactly replicate their antecedents. They will share strong bonds but also have developed new qualities through their histories and experiences, including the experience of interaction with other cultures.

In focusing on difference, we may fail to notice what civilisations have in common. Muzaffar comments that Huntington fails to highlight the similarities which civilisations often embody, sharing concerns and sometimes common perspectives on:

the relationship of the human being to his environment ... the importance of family, the significance of moral leadership and indeed the meaning and purpose of life.⁴⁵

Huntington's essay is more preoccupied with the barriers between societies, particularly with the barriers he perceives as erected by ethnicity and religion. He sees religion as central, 'perhaps the central force that motivates and mobilizes people'.⁴⁶ Huntington argues that:

even more than ethnicity, religion discriminates sharply and exclusively among people. A person can be half French and half Arab simultaneously ... It is more difficult to be half Catholic and half Muslim.⁴⁷

However, one could argue that in certain cultures it *is* possible to take from different creeds. For instance, in Japan it may be possible to incorporate Shinto, Confucian and Buddhist rituals into a family's life in order to meet various social needs.⁴⁸ Huntington's analysis of inter-civilisational relations chooses to focus on setting up irreconcilable opposites. This is not an unusual device. Indeed it is a tactic which is often usefully employed in both domestic and international politics. As discussed earlier, William Pfaff has pointed to the consequences of the rhetoric of irreconcilable difference in the former Yugoslavia.⁴⁹ Similarly, Salame argues:

Islamists, too, would like fellow Muslims to believe that Islam is really too self-contained to adjust to modernity or democracy. It is high time to denounce the implicit alliance between the old guard Western orientalists and the new wave of local Islamists on the ill-defined presumed uniqueness of Islam.⁵⁰

The concept of there being an 'implicit alliance' between the parties at the extreme is interesting, both parties tacitly reinforcing the position of the other by reaffirming their sense of difference and the existence of the other as a threat.⁵¹ Huntington's portrayal of Islam certainly appears to fit this mould, it is a portrayal widely criticised by most commentators as providing an extremist and undifferentiated image of Islamic civilisation. It is an image which fails to acknowledge the divisions which exist within Islam, exaggerates the degree to which 'fundamentalist' forces represent Islamic societies, underestimates the degree of disunity in the Muslim world and overestimates the strength of the

position of Muslim communities in many of the conflicts cited.⁵² Huntington focuses only on Islam interacting with other civilisations in conflict rather than in peaceful interchange.⁵³ His broad brush treatment of the history of Islam's relationship with the West is striking. Hardly pausing for breath, it sweeps across 1300 years of history to provide a neat, linear continuum between the Crusades, the resistance to European colonialism and the Gulf war which is devoid of any nuance or contextual detail that might help to illuminate the complexities of the relationship between those close civilisational cousins. Instead, it is a relationship in which Islam appears to pose a continual threat to the West, a threat which is perceived to continue in the Confucian-Islamic conspiracy.

One has to ask what is purpose of this analysis? Is Huntington simply 'looking for enemies'?⁵⁴ With the end of the Cold War, the West's old adversary, the Soviet Union is no longer a threat. A new one must be found if the traditional structures of international relations, as perceived by conflict theorists, are to be sustained. With the apparent demise of the nation-state, or perhaps in Huntington's current view, the demise of the ideological blocs of the bipolar system, Huntington appears anxious to replace the old unit of conflict with a new one, thus to sustain a neorealist paradigm. This new unit is civilisations. The threat from the East is replaced by the threat from the South. In the opinion of Didier Bigo, Huntington is continuing to 'legitimize the discourse of fear' in this new world order. Like Muzaffar, Bigo suggests that Huntington's discourse continues to provide a rationale for a strong military posture on behalf of Western powers such as the USA.⁵⁵ Bigo goes further to suggest that military and national identities have for a long time been confused. The existence of the enemy enhances the cohesion of the group. Losing an enemy could thus be perceived as a threat to the constitution of national identity. In this case, national identities are being linked to civilisational groupings, rather than ideological groupings of the Cold War.

Bigo's comments are most interesting in the light of recent remarks made by Huntington elsewhere. In a recent article, Huntington considered the prospects for democracy in the post-Cold War. His concern with regard to the consequences of 'the triumph of democracy' for the cohesion of the USA was evident. He observed that the USA has always defined itself in antithesis to someone else, be that European monarchy, imperialism or communism. 'How' he writes 'will we know who we are if we don't know who we are against?'⁵⁶ This type of analysis implies that self-identification *demand*s the existence of an enemy. With the demise of the Soviet Union, that enemy is now being constituted as other civilisations.

In this sense, Huntington's essay serves to try to capture the concept of inter-civilisational relations and coopt it into the neorealist paradigm. This then casts some doubt on Huntington's suggestion that he is offering students of international affairs a truly new paradigm. In his 'new' paradigm, the constitution of the units of the international system may be perceived as being altered, but the structure of the international system continues to be seen as defined primarily by conflict between these units. As always, there is a danger that the expectation of conflict can contribute to the generation of conflict. There is the danger of the focus on the irreconcilability of civilisations, rather than on their

techniques for coexistence, could become a self-fulfilling prophecy.⁵⁷ If this is permitted to happen, there is a danger of smothering the insights that this branch of research may offer by focusing on one, largely negative aspect of inter-civilisational interaction.

The West *versus* the rest

The main lines of confrontation and threat upon which Huntington chooses to focus in this essay are those which he draws between 'the West and the Rest'.⁵⁸ It is quite evident from the outset of the essay that Huntington is preoccupied with this relationship, ie the West with non-Western societies. Huntington obviously feels that the significance of this relationship has acquired a new priority in the post-Cold War era. Until recently, he argues, non-Western civilisations were merely the objects of history, not its movers or shapers.

With the end of the Cold War, international politics moves out of its Western phase, and its center-piece becomes the interaction between the West and the non-Western civilizations and among non-Western civilizations.⁵⁹

In a sense, therefore, he is arguing that, even though—as he has remarked—relations between civilisations have always formed the broader reaches of human history, International Relations until recently has been devoid of inter-civilisational relations since it has focused on intra-Western relations. This is perhaps a revealing comment on the occidocentric focus of the discipline to date.

In fact, consideration of the role of civilisations is something which has been somewhat neglected in recent International Relations. Where they appear, civilisations have implicitly been regarded as pre-modern entities which preceded the spread of the modern Western state system and the 'universalisation' of Western ideas, institutions and values.⁶⁰ With the expansion of the West, the idea of civilisation often seemed to be considered synonymous with the West. Gong's work indicates that while many civilisations have considered themselves to be universal in theory, modern Western civilisation is the first which has had the capacity to do so in practice.⁶¹ This appears to give greater credence to the West's claim to the universality of Western civilisation. The discipline of International Relations has, since its inception, been firmly rooted in the intellectual traditions and experiences of the West, as Huntington's article implies. Perhaps this accounts for the virtual absence of its consideration of inter-civilisational relations. It has until recently focused on intra-Western relations.⁶²

Huntington's attitude to the role of the West in the international system is somewhat ambivalent. At points, his essay appears to criticise the West's dominance of the modern international system to promote and protect its own interests.

The West in effect is using international institutions, military power and economic resources to run the world in the way that will maintain Western predominance, protect Western interests and promote Western political and economic values.⁶³

He recognises that the West has promoted these values as universal but questions

their universal applicability despite the 'superficial' penetration of Western culture into other civilisations, pointing out that 'the values that are most important in the West are least important world-wide'. While it is recognised that 'a central axis of world politics'⁶⁴ in the future is likely to be the way the non-West responds to Western powers and values, he appears sceptical as to the degree to which unique Western concepts, such as the Western interpretation of democracy, individualism, human rights, the rule of law, to name a few, can successfully transfer to other civilisations.⁶⁵ Huntington even argues that efforts to introduce Western values have had a negative effect; they have engendered a counter-reaction from other civilisations.⁶⁶ However, returning to his role as Adviser to the Prince in his conclusion, Huntington suggests that in the short term, the West should pursue a policy:

to support in other civilizations groups sympathetic to Western values and interests; to strengthen international institutions that reflect and legitimate Western interests and values and to promote the involvement of the non-Western states in those institutions.⁶⁷

Following Huntington's own analysis concerning the problems of transferring Western values and concepts, this would appear to be a provocative and not necessarily productive series of policies. In this respect, there appears to be ambivalence in Huntington's essay as to whether Westernisation is a force that will bring civilisations together or drive them further apart.⁶⁸

What is 'the West'?

Huntington's ambivalence may stem in part from his failure to analyse his own concept of the West.⁶⁹ It is assumed as a unified whole. Huntington obviously perceives the West as a territorial entity, encompassing Western Europe and extending to North America. In contrast, Owen Harries has proposed that the West as a united political community was constructed in response to the extreme threat posed by the Soviet Union. With the reduction of this threat which the Cold War sustained, Harries argues that there is a danger that 'the West' might no longer survive as a united, political entity.⁷⁰ To Huntington, the West means more than the more formal military and political alliances that Harries's analysis suggests. It obviously encompasses certain ideas and values, such as individualism and liberal democracy.

The West is in fact a complex entity which encompasses many perceptions and concepts. Its usage is often conceptual rather than strictly geographical. These concepts and perceptions are not static, but evolve over time and may vary in different contexts.⁷¹ For instance, in the early twentieth century, the concept of the West was shaped by the experiences of European growth and expansion through capitalism and imperialism. During the 19th century, European imperialism was strongly influenced by the belief in the superiority of Western civilisation over others. In the eyes of Europeans, this helped to legitimate the idea that it was the duty of the West to bring 'enlightenment', 'progress' and 'development' to the less advanced civilisations of the world through European expansion, the *mission civilisatrice*.

The West of the early twentieth century had its geographical heartland in Europe. It entailed strong religious and racial overtones, representing cultures which were largely white and Christian. It entailed a sense of the power relationships which existed between West and non-West. It also entailed concepts, values and norms which were thought to be appropriate to 'civilised' societies by Westerners.

In the mid-twentieth century, the West was constituted primarily in antithesis to totalitarianism, first facism and later, communism. The West's relationship to the communist East became the defining characteristic of post World War Two international politics. The West saw itself as defined by a system of liberal, democratic politics and free capitalist economies. The language of the Cold War was replete with normative values. The Western democracies associating themselves with the principles of freedom, self-determination and the rights of the individual.

The heartland of the West in this era shifted towards the United States, although geographically the lines between the ideological blocs of East and West were drawn in Europe. However, as the Cold War became globalised, the terms East and West took on more of a conceptual than a geographical meaning. It defined a global system of ideological allegiances which broadly underlay geostrategic structures.

An alternative perception of the West in this era focuses our attention on the economic power of Western states. The West represented the developed states in juxtaposition to the states and communities of the developing or 'third world'. From this perspective, the lines between West and non-West are strongly reminiscent of the structures of the old European empires. There continued to be strong racial overtones with the white communities, including the former colonies such as Australia, Canada and New Zealand, being conceptually included in the West.

The West in both eras was not constituted by geography alone, but also by power, wealth, race and norms. A combination of these factors decided who was included or excluded from the West. The West represented not just a location, but a way of life. The West of different eras had points in common, but it was not static. The constitution of the West changed in different eras and contexts.

In the post-Cold War era, the concept of what and who constitutes the West again appears to be in transition. The end of the Cold War means that the West is no longer constituted in antithesis to the communist East, but the demise of the East has not led to an end of the West through the universalisation of key Western concepts and values. Although many aspects of Western culture and society have spread and been adapted by non-Western societies, the West has not become a global civilisation, but continues to be seen as a distinct political community. In Europe, for instance, the Iron Curtain which separated West and East may have fallen, but the distinction between the West and the 'postcommunist countries' remains.⁷² In a now more complex world, the lines of definition between West and non-West are harder to draw, since some of the characteristics which had for long been synonymous with the West, such as wealth and economic development, are no longer the West's prerogative. Concepts such as Westernisation and modernisation are no longer synonymous. Countries such as

Japan may be regarded as modernised, but not necessarily as Westernised. In this respect, some of Japan's regional neighbours are looking to that country rather than 'the West' as a model.⁷¹ Western political and economic concepts, such as democracy and capitalism, are undergoing adaptation and reinterpretation.

What this discussion suggests is that civilisational identities such as the West are fluid and evolving entities. They are not fixed political organisations or necessarily limited to a narrow geographical region, but may expand, contract and even synthesise with the spread of people, ideas and institutions. In addition, they may be perceived differently in different eras, and by different perspectives.

The fluidity and variety of perceptions of the West is demonstrated by variety of views on the role of the West to be found among the commentators who responded to Huntington's essay. There is, on the one hand, the view of the West which is found in the responses of Kishore Mahbubani and Chandra Muzaffar. Both implicitly agree with the relevance of civilisations as a unit of analysis, but strongly disagree with Huntington on his analysis of the problems and of the role of the West. For both Muzaffar and Mahbubani, it is not civilisations but the West and its attitude to other civilisations which is the source of conflict in international affairs. Muzaffar argues that it is US and Western dominance of the planet, not the clash of civilisations which is the root cause of global conflict. He accuses Huntington of seeking to divert attention from Western dominance: 'he wants to preserve, protect and perpetuate Western dominance' by conjuring up spectres such as the Confucian-Islamic connection.⁷⁴ Huntington's goal here, he argues, is to persuade the USA that it should not reduce its military capability.⁷⁵ Muzaffar alleges that Huntington's article reflects Western fears of the challenges presented, particularly by the new dynamism of East Asia. His warnings about the threats posed by Confucian China are 'yet another attempt to curb the rise of yet another non-Western competitor'.⁷⁶

Mahbubani also sees Huntington's article as symptomatic of a West failing to come to terms with the shift in the balance of civilisational power. Continuing a theme which he has elaborated elsewhere,⁷⁷ Mahbubani argues that the West is the cause of its own downfall, first in failing to come to terms with the shifting balance of power away from the small populations of the West to the developing world, and second because of the hubris of Western society, promoting, for instance, individual freedom to the detriment of the broader interests of the integrity and health of the community. Mahbubani acknowledges that 'the West is still the repository of the greatest assets and achievements of human civilization'. But he adds 'Western values do not form a seamless web. Some are good. Some are bad. But one has to stand outside the West to see this'.⁷⁸

The views of the West articulated by Muzaffar and Mahbubani stand in marked contrast to those of Robert Bartley and Gerard Piel.⁷⁹ For Bartley, for instance, the expansion of the Western model is obviously the dynamic of the new world order. Bartley is optimistic with regard to the positive impact made by forces of progress and modernity which are being promoted through global communications. In contrast to Mahbubani, he sees economic progress and Western ideas, such as democracy and personal freedom, as 'profoundly linked with the capitalist formula that is *the* formula for economic development'.⁸⁰ In

a sense, therefore, he sees Westernisation as a package of both economic and political development.

Huntington appears to be more sceptical than Bartley with regard to the homogenising influence of Westernisation. He does demonstrate an awareness that a number of non-Western countries may wish to 'modernise but not to Westernise'.⁸¹ In fact, for Huntington, it is further evidence of the differences which will continue to exist between different civilisations in the post-Cold War world. In his Response, Huntington more firmly rejects the idea that the end of the Cold War will lead to the universalisation of liberal democracy, or broad cultural homogenisation through increased communications and modernisation. Increased contact, he believes, will further accentuate rather than assuage cultural differences.

The presumption of Westerners that other peoples who modernize must become 'like us' is a bit of Western arrogance that in itself illustrates the clash of civilizations. To argue that Slovenes and Serbs, Arabs and Jews, Hindus and Muslims, Russians and Tajiks, Tamils and Sinhalese, Tibetans and Chinese, Japanese and Americans all belonging to a single Western-defined universal civilization is to fly in the face of reality.⁸²

The 'Huntington debate', therefore, demonstrates the existence of a number of distinct schools of thought on the role and future of Western civilisation in world politics, one which sees its influence as strongly positive, another more sceptical and critical of its impact. What is interesting is the vision for the future that we might discern in these two contrary positions. Broadly put, one sees Western expansion as an interconnected package, where economic and political values are closely linked. The other school is more selective about what it is desirable to take from the West. Huntington appears to come somewhere between these two schools of thought. He advocates the promotion of Western ideas and institutions, but is simultaneously pessimistic as to the extent to which Western ideas and values can be accepted by non-Western societies. His desire to promote Western interests and values is tempered by his gloomy assessment that Western culture is not only under attack, but in retreat. However, Huntington's pessimism need not be infectious. The degree to which one civilization can selectively synthesise certain elements of another culture into its own, while weeding out those elements seen as undesirable or inappropriate is an intriguing and highly topical question which demands much further analysis.⁸³

While it is not necessary to argue that technology and communications are producing a culturally homogeneous world, it is difficult to ignore the broader dimensions of the impact of increased interaction, an impact felt by all societies involved. One of the processes through which societies change and develop is through contact with other societies. Changes may be violent or subtle. Ideas and technologies may be received and interpreted differently by different communities. There is no way to predict what the long-term impact of such changes will be on different societies, or how such changes will alter the culture of different civilisations. What this demonstrates is that civilisations are dynamic entities, whose cultures may be subject to change and adaptation.⁸⁴ One of the most commonly cited example of this process is Japan's development in interaction

with the West. But it is worth noting that Japan has not only learnt from the West. By initially borrowing Western methods and ideas, for example in the field of production, Japanese society has synthesised these with elements of its own culture, generating ideas and methods, some of which were transmitted back to the West. This process may be viewed as an example of how different interacting civilisations will continue to maintain their cultural distinctness. However, it could also be viewed as a further demonstration of the creative interaction which occurs between civilisations, reminding us that this interaction is rarely a one-way process.

Reflections and conclusions

In reflecting upon the 'Huntington debate', a question which naturally comes to mind is why is this debate occurring now? In his commentary, Albert I. Weeks noted that, in his focus on the macro-picture, Huntington was returning to the precedents of Toynbee, Spengler and Wright. He notes that in the 1950s, a vigorous debate took place between the macro-scholars and the micro-scholars, such as Morgenthau, Herz and Aron about the proper methodological focus of International Relations. Weeks argues that Huntington's resurrection of this debate is a result of the failure of globalism to take root.⁸⁵ It may be worth noting that the recession in the 'macro' school of thought and the predominance of the state centred 'micro' thinker appears to coincide with the evolution of the Cold War, an international system whose political rigidities were reflected in the rigidity of the models in International Relations thought. It would appear to be more than coincidental that the recession of the Cold War sees a return to the macro debate. The end of the Cold War is forcing scholars out of their rigid modes of thinking into contemplating in greater depth the genuine complexities of even international politics. We are faced with a more complex world in which we realise that politics are infinitely more intricate and diverse than the interaction of uniform states within a bipolar system, such as Kenneth Waltz described in 1979.⁸⁶ We are forced to step back from the intense, but narrow, focus which for so long occupied the gaze of students of international affairs, to adopt a broader geographical and temporal perspective. This is why scholars such as Huntington are seeking to come to terms with interaction on levels other than the inter-state.⁸⁷

However, Huntington's analysis continues to emphasise conflict in the global arena. To simply focus on conflict and difference does not necessarily help us understand the complexity of relationships in the world. This is not to deny that conflict is an important part of inter-civilisational relations, but our analysis of conflict must be based on an understanding that its causes are more complex than the existence of difference. Huntington's article does highlight the fact that civilisational identity is an important aspect of world politics. In his definition of civilisations he notes that they are composed of common objective elements, such as language, history, religion and culture, and also by the 'subjective *self-identification* of people'; this is, he argues, the broadest level of self-

identification.⁸⁸ It is certainly an element of the politics of identity that we should not ignore. Huntington for his part anticipates that:

[d]ecreasingly able to mobilise support and form coalitions on the basis of ideology, governments and groups will increasingly attempt to mobilise support by appealing to common religion and civilizational identity.⁸⁹

While this trend of appealing to civilisational identity is not a new phenomenon,⁹⁰ Huntington is correct in arguing that this identity is a potentially powerful political force and may be subject to political manipulation (as may other forms of identity). Indeed, Huntington's article has provided a number of examples where this has occurred. But civilisational identity is more than a rhetorical device. To see it only as a rhetorical device is to fail to pay sufficient attention to this area of international interaction. Civilisational identity can be a powerful agent of identity with a strong appeal. Therefore it is important for us to acknowledge and understand the rhetoric and appeal of civilisational identity in our study of international politics.⁹¹

Huntington's article should be welcomed for putting the issue of civilisations back onto the intellectual map of the discipline of International Relations. Perhaps a scholar less prominent or less provocative than Huntington may not have received as much attention or evoked so much reaction. However, there is some doubt as to whether Huntington is genuinely interested in inter-civilisational relations in their full complexity, or simply interested in 'looking for enemies', trying to locate and justify the next threat. While he defines civilisations as dynamic entities, his essay portrays them as immutable and distant communities whose differences are compounded and confirmed by conflict on the local and global level. While he acknowledges civilisations as just one identity of many that any individual relates to, his analysis does not present them to us as an identity that coexists with other identities and forms of political communities in the international political arena. While he concludes his essay with an appeal for great understanding and toleration between different cultures, the thrust of his essay advocates the promotion and protection of Western values.

The adoption of a broader perspective in the study of inter-civilisational relations is surely called for. This would treat civilisations as complex, fluid and dynamic entities which evolve both in response to internal dynamics, and to interaction with other cultures. In an increasingly inter-connected world, the interaction of civilisations is a central aspect of international affairs which merits further research and discussion.

Notes

I wish to thank those whose comments and suggestions on earlier versions of this paper were of great assistance to me, in particular Greg Fry, Peter Van Ness, Jim Richardson, Stephanie Lawson and Hayward Alker

¹ S Huntington, 'The clash of civilizations?', *Foreign Affairs* 72(3) 1993, pp 22–49 (henceforth referred to as 'Clash').

² Professor Huntington's essay has generated responses from Europe, South Africa, Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Australia, China, Mexico, Egypt and Malaysia to name but a few places. *Centerpiece* (CTIA at Harvard University, 8(1) 1994).

- ³ S Huntington, 'If not civilizations, what?: paradigms of the post-Cold War world—Response', *Foreign Affairs* 72(5) 1993, pp 186–194. Henceforth referred to as 'Response'.
- ⁴ If we take Fukuyama's analysis to its logical extension, 'the West' should have disappeared with the 'end of history'. But, as is evident from the positions adopted in the responses to Professor Huntington's essay, the West is very much alive. F Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York: Macmillan, 1992.
- ⁵ Huntington, 'Clash', pp 29–31.
- ⁶ This is an argument which is reminiscent of Kenneth Waltz's critique of interdependence theory. K Waltz 'The myth of national interdependence', in C Kindleberger (ed), *The International Corporation*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1970. Huntington further emphasises this point in his 'Response', p 192.
- ⁷ Huntington, 'Clash', p 25–29.
- ⁸ *Ibid.* pp 45–48.
- ⁹ *Ibid.* pp 39–41.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.* pp 48–49.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.* p 24.
- ¹² *Ibid.* p 25.
- ¹³ Huntington, 'Response', p 191.
- ¹⁴ F Ajami, 'The summoning', *Foreign Affairs* 72(4) 1993 and A L Weeks, 'Do civilizations hold?', *Foreign Affairs*, 72(1) 1993.
- ¹⁵ Ajami, 'The summoning', pp 2, 3, 5, 9.
- ¹⁶ Puchala argues that civilisations are not political organisations, but have political organisations within them. D Puchala, 'International encounters of another kind', paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, Washington, DC, 30 March–2 April 1994, p 12. The culture of civilisations, however, influences and shapes the political organisations which it encompasses as they evolve over time.
- ¹⁷ Huntington 'Clash', p 34; and 'Response', p 192.
- ¹⁸ Ajami, 'The summoning', p 6.
- ¹⁹ Huntington in his 'Response' cites further illustrations of inter-civilisational conflict, but provides little additional analysis of the causes of these conflicts. 'Response', pp 188–189.
- ²⁰ Ajami, 'The summoning', p 7.
- ²¹ G Salame, 'Islam and the West', *Foreign Policy* 90 1993, p 29. Huntington may also have exaggerated the cohesion of the West and, in particular, popular support in Western countries for attacks on Iraq in January 1993, particularly those which resulted in civilian casualties in Basra and Baghdad.
- ²² G Joffe, 'Middle Eastern views of the Gulf conflict and its aftermath', *Review of International Studies* 19(2) 1993, pp 182–198.
- ²³ See for instance C Job, 'Yugoslavia's ethnic lures', *Foreign Policy* 92 1993; and I Banac, 'Misreading the Balkans' (Review), *Foreign Policy*, 93 1992–93. Both note the role of certain Serbian intellectuals in fuelling modern Serbian nationalism.
- ²⁴ W Pfaff, 'Invitation to war', *Foreign Affairs* 72(3) 1993, p 97.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.* p 101.
- ²⁶ Ajami, 'The summoning', p 7.
- ²⁷ I Kirkpatrick, 'The modernising imperative, tradition and change', *Foreign Affairs* 72(4) 1993, p 23. Indeed, as Pfaff comments, the Bosman government was the only government in the former Yugoslavia which continued to defend policies based on liberal, pluralist principles. See W Pfaff, 'Nuts to the "war of civilizations"', *International Herald Tribune*, 4 November 1993.
- ²⁸ Pfaff, 'Nuts to the "war of civilizations"'.²⁹
- ²⁹ Pfaff observes that Serbian irredentists and nationalists spent much of 1992–93 working to turn their assertion of the impossibility of coexistence into fact, and for all practical purposes have now undoubtedly succeeded. 'Invitation to war', p 104. See also S Lawson on the power of myths of national identity, 'The authentic state: history and tradition in the ideology of ethnonationalism', paper presented to the Division of International Relations and Politics, RSPaCS, Australian National University, October 1993.
- ³⁰ C Muzaffar, 'The clash of civilizations or camouflaging dominance?', *Third World Network Features*, Penang, 1993, p 2.
- ³¹ Kirkpatrick, 'The modernising imperative', p 23.
- ³² Muzaffar, 'The clash of civilizations or camouflaging dominance?', p 3.
- ³³ D Puchala, 'International encounters of another kind', p 13.
- ³⁴ See A Bozeman, *Politics and Culture in International History*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960, ch 4.
- ³⁵ See for instance W McNeill, *The Rise of the West: A History of Human Community*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1963; Arnold J Toynbee, *A Study of History*, 12 vols, London: Oxford University Press, 1960; *The World and the West*, BBC Reith Lectures, London: Oxford University Press, 1953; *Civilization on Trial*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1948, Fernand Braudel, *On History*, trans S Matthews,

- Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1980, and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Geopolitics and Geoculture: Essays on the Changing World System*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- ⁴⁶ W McNeill 'The rise of the West after 25 years', *Journal of World History*, 1(1) 1990, pp 2-4.
- ⁴⁷ Hayward Alker discusses Huntington's essay in the context of alternative culturally orientated civilisational approaches. In a fascinating analysis, he compares Huntington's ideas to those of authors working in three other 'overlapping paradigms of civilizational dialectics', these being the Hegelian, Toynbeeian and Braudelien-Wallersteinian perspectives. His work highlights an existing tradition of scholarship which students of inter-civilisational relations may call upon to gain perhaps broader insights into their nature. H Alker on the dialectics of civilisation: 'if not Huntington's "civilizations", then whose?', *Chinese Social Science Quarterly*, Spring 1994.
- ⁴⁸ Huntington, 'Clash', pp 25, 26.
- ⁴⁹ M Keck & K Sikkink, 'Transnational issue networks in international politics', paper presented at the Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 20 October 1994.
- ⁵⁰ R Bartley, 'The case for optimism: the West should believe in itself', *Foreign Affairs* 72(4) 1993, p 17.
- ⁵¹ In making this point, Muzaffar also seeks to refute Huntington's point that these organisations can only be successful when based on a common civilisation. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) would also be a contradiction of this point based on Huntington's own categorisation of existing civilisations. Muzaffar, 'The clash of civilizations or camouflaging dominance?', p 3. Huntington's own pessimism with regard to the homogenising influence of liberal democracy and the processes of modernisation are reiterated in his 'Response', pp 191-192.
- ⁵² Liu Binyan, 'Civilization grafting: no culture is an island', *Foreign Affairs* 72(4) 1993, p 19.
- ⁵³ Muzaffar, 'The clash of civilizations or camouflaging dominance?', p 3.
- ⁵⁴ Ajami, 'The summoner', p 2.
- ⁵⁵ Muzaffar, 'The clash of civilizations or camouflaging dominance?', p 3.
- ⁵⁶ Huntington, 'Response', p 192.
- ⁵⁷ Huntington, 'Clash', p 27.
- ⁵⁸ See E R A Selisman & A Johnson (eds), *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* Vol 1, New York: Macmillan, 1930-35, p 166.
- ⁵⁹ One could say that a similar tactic is being pursued when President Mahathir seeks to construct the identity of Asianess, or with Lee Kuan Yew's portrayal of Confucianism. See S Lawson, 'Institutionalising peaceful conflict: political opposition and the challenge of democratisation in Asia', *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 47(1) 1993.
- ⁶⁰ Salame, 'Islam and the West', p 33.
- ⁶¹ Arnold Toynbee pointed out that the adversary can often provide a useful scapegoat, distracting attention from problems or faults at home. In 1947, he argued that 'Communism and Capitalism were performing this insidious service for one another'. In the past, he points out, it was Islam who provided the scapegoat for the West. A Toynbee 'The present point in history', in *Civilizations on Trial*, p 21. See also Alker, 'On the dialectics of civilization', p 15.
- ⁶² Ajami, 'The summoning', p 5; and Kirkpatrick, 'The modernising imperative', p 23. Mahhubani points out that Huntington's essay fails to acknowledge that in many situations it is Muslim communities who are in the weaker position: '(i)n all conflicts between the Muslims and pro-Western forces the Muslims are losing, and losing badly, be they Azeris, Palestinians, Iraqis, Iranians or Bosnian Muslims'. K Mahhubani, 'The danger of decadence: what the rest can teach the West', *Foreign Affairs* 72(4) 1993, p 12.
- ⁶³ Chandra Muzaffar accuses Huntington of being an 'Islam baiter' who has failed to acknowledge that in many instances the 'Islamic threat' is in fact the struggle of Islamic groups and individuals to free their communities from continued Western domination, Muzaffar, pp 6, 7. See also R E Rubinstein & J Crocker, 'Challenging Huntington', *Foreign Policy* 96 1994, p 124; and J Farley, 'The Mediterranean: South threats to Northern states?', *The World Today*, 50(2) 1994, pp 33-36, who note some of the social, economic and historical factors which have contributed to the rise of the popularity of Islamist groups.
- ⁶⁴ This is a phrase used by Dr Peter Van Ness in conversations with regard to the Huntington essay.
- ⁶⁵ D Bigo 'Great debates in a small world: debates on international relations and their link with the world of security,' paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, Washington, DC, 28 March-2 April 1994.
- ⁶⁶ S Huntington, 'The ungovernability of democracy' (Symposium), *American Enterprise* 4 1993, p 37.
- ⁶⁷ This point was made by Dr David Canroux in his presentation at the Australian National University, Canberra 4 November 1993.
- ⁶⁸ See K Mahhubani, 'The West and the rest', *The National Interest*, 1992.
- ⁶⁹ Huntington, 'Clash', p 23.
- ⁷⁰ See for instance R Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979.
- ⁷¹ See Gong on the expansion of international society in G Gong, *The Standard of 'Civilization' in International Society*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984, pp 5, 6.

⁶² One could argue about whether the Cold War, the confrontation of East and West was inter- or intra-civilisational. Some authors, such as Toynbee and Huntington, argued that Russia is part of a separate civilisation, others – in this case, Kirkpatrick – that it is essentially a part of the West. If, however, one focused on the Cold War as a battle of ideologies, it is interesting to note that both Marxist-Leninism and liberal capitalism stem from a Western intellectual tradition and share many values and assumptions. See J O'Hagan, 'How the West was lost: the absence of the concept of the West from International Relations and its implications', paper presented to the Australian Political Studies Association, Melbourne, 29 September 1 October 1993.

⁶³ Huntington, 'Clash', p. 40.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁶⁵ See for example his discussion of the way in which the introduction of democratic structures in Islamic countries have simply empowered anti-Western elements. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁶⁸ In his 'Response', Huntington is more emphatic in his distinction between Westernisation and modernisation. His pessimism with regard to the retreat of Western culture is also more pronounced. 'Response', p. 192.

⁶⁹ Ajami in a footnote remarks that the West itself remains unexamined in Huntington's essay. Ajami, 'The summoning', p. 3.

⁷⁰ O'Hannes, 'The collapse of "The West"', *Foreign Affairs* 72(4) 1993, pp. 41–49.

⁷¹ O'Hagan, 'How the West was lost'.

⁷² See, for instance, V Havel, 'A call for sacrifice: the co-responsibility of the West', *Foreign Affairs*, 73(2) 1994.

⁷³ Mahbubani, 'The West and the rest'.

⁷⁴ Muzaffar, 'The clash of civilizations or camouflaging dominance?', p. 4.

⁷⁵ Muzaffar argues that Huntington's allegations with regard to the alleged Confucian-Islamic connection are seriously flawed by, among other things, highlighting the USA's role as a major arms dealer with the states of the Middle East. Indeed, Huntington's argument implies that Western powers are engaged predominantly in reducing arms proliferation and fails to point out that states such as the USA, the UK and France are among the largest arms dealers in the world. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁷⁷ See Mahbubani, 'The West and the rest', p. 14, and 'The United States: go east young man', *Washington Quarterly*, 17(2) 1994, pp. 5–23.

⁷⁸ Mahbubani, 'The dangers of decadence', p. 14.

⁷⁹ Bartley, 'The case for optimism', and G Piel, 'The West is best', *Foreign Affairs* 72(4) 1993.

⁸⁰ Bartley, 'The case for optimism', p. 17.

⁸¹ Mahbubani, 'The dangers of decadence', p. 14.

⁸² Huntington, 'Response', p. 192.

⁸³ This is not a new issue and was one upon which Toynbee reflected in the 1950s. See Toynbee, *The World and the West*.

⁸⁴ For a discussion on cultural flows in civilisational encounters, see Puchala, 'International encounters of another kind'.

⁸⁵ Weeks, 'Do civilizations hold?', pp. 24–25.

⁸⁶ K Waltz, *The Theory of International Politics*, New York: McGraw Hill, 1979.

⁸⁷ Alker reminds us that scholars such as Toynbee, Braudel and Wallerstein have been aware of the significance of the broader span of history, the *longue durée*, in seeking to understand social and ecological change. Alker, 'On the dialectics of civilization', p. 19.

⁸⁸ Huntington, 'Clash', p. 24. Others have argued that this definition ignores the common identity which all men and women share as human beings, and also neglects the evolution of 'international society' as a multi-civilisational system of states. Huntington, however, is quick to dismiss any suggestion of a one world paradigm which would imply the existence of a world or universal civilisation. In doing so, he perhaps dismisses unnecessarily further dimensions of the multiple identities that humanity shares. See Alker, 'On the dialectics of civilization', pp. 17–18.

⁸⁹ Huntington, 'Clash', p. 29.

⁹⁰ Consider, for instance, the appeal in late 19th century Europe to the *mission civilisatrice* or the appeals to the solidarity of East and West during the Cold War which, while addressing communities seen to be divided on ideological grounds, were often couched in terms of civilisational norms. See O'Hagan, 'How the West was lost'.

⁹¹ Camroux's work on Malaysia argues that Mahathir is seeking to appeal to the idea of Asianess, ironically an identity defined primarily in antithesis to the West. Camroux, David 'Looking East' and defining inwards: Malaysia as a self-conscious middle power during the Mahathir era, 1981–1993: Seminar, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, Canberra 20 November 1993.

Rebellion in Chiapas: rural reforms and popular struggle

NEIL HARVEY

The armed uprising by between 3000 and 4000 Indians in Chiapas on 1 January 1994 took virtually everyone by surprise.¹ Even people familiar with the region were astonished by the scale of the rebellion and the remarkably sophisticated organisation which had evidently been prepared over several years. The tactics of the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN) differed from the *foco* strategies of earlier guerrilla movements in Mexico and Latin America. Unlike its precursors, the EZLN is not a small band of rebels hoping to attract support by rising up in arms. This movement already had a mass base when it made its appearance.

The origins and significance of the uprising have been debated by many analysts and it clearly represents a watershed in modern Mexican history. This paper discusses its rural dimension. It attempts to show how policies to modernise the economy and a series of rural reforms have had a negative impact for most *campesinos* in Chiapas, particularly in the Selva and Altos regions.

The rebellion is unlike previous guerrilla struggles in Latin America in that it does not aspire by itself to seize state power and lead the masses in social revolution. In its declaration of war on the federal army and government, the Zapatistas called on all Mexicans to participate in whatever way they can—no necessarily with arms—in a broad movement for 'jobs, land, housing, food health, education, independence, freedom, democracy, justice and peace'. Its political discourse is therefore extremely modern in comparison to Sendero Luminoso and earlier guerrilla organisations. Rather than engage in a 'war of movement' to destroy the state, the EZLN represents more of a 'war of position' aimed at shifting the balance of forces in favour of popular and democratic movements, thereby isolating and ultimately defeating anti-democratic tendencies within the ruling Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), the state and the rest of society. Its stated political objectives are to make government accountable to the people and to achieve effective representation for all Mexicans, particularly the indigenous population. It justified the uprising in terms of the lack of conditions for free and democratic elections, calling on the legislative and judicial branches of government to depose the president, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, and install a transitional government to organise fair elections. The rebellion was also directed against the economic model implemented by Salinas. The seizure of seven towns on 1 January 1994 was timed to coincide with the entry into effect of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). One of the first EZLN communiqués stated that NAFTA 'is a death certificate for the Indian peoples of Mexico, who are dispensable for the government of Carlos Salinas de Gortari'. The EZLN also called for the redistribution of *latifundios* (large private

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estates) and the repeal of reforms carried out in 1992 to Article 27 of the Constitution (the statutes governing land tenure).

The paper is divided into three main sections. The first discusses the effects of agricultural modernisation and institutional reforms in Chiapas. It begins by emphasising the constraints faced by the social sector and, by way of contrast, notes the expansion of private sector commercial agriculture after 1982.² Attention is then given to the effects of institutional reforms in the coffee and maize sectors. The Salinas government's Solidaridad programme is then examined in the light of the problems facing the social sector in Chiapas.

The second section discusses the effects of the modifications to land tenure and agrarian codes which were approved by Congress in December 1991 and February 1992—a process widely known as 'ejido reform'. It describes the recent history of limited land distribution in Chiapas and the repression suffered by legal *campesino* organisations. This contributed to the generally negative reception of the ejido reform, particularly in the Selva region. The content and implications for Chiapas of the changes to Article 27 are discussed with this backdrop in mind. Although the measurable, direct effects of the ejido reform may not be seen for many years, the effects on *campesino* expectations have had no greater expression than the rebellion itself. In particular the legislated end of land reform was interpreted as the final break in the government's commitment to the rural poor. The loss of hope in acceding to a piece of land contributed to the radicalisation of thousands of Indians in eastern Chiapas.

The third section describes the process of *campesino* organising in the Selva since the early 1970s, with the goal of explaining why the EZLN was able to attract support in this particular region. The failure of successive governments to provide economic support and political space for representative *campesino* organisations is seen to have contributed to a weakening of legalistic strategies and the radicalisation of discontent. These findings differ from the argument put forward by Warman who claims that the rebellion was implanted from outside by political activists pursuing their own agenda.³ The analysis presented here is closer to that of Hernández and local *campesino* leaders.⁴ One of the interviews given by the EZLN *subcomandante* Marcos also reveals the desperation caused by the authorities' constant rejection of popular demands and proposals.⁵

The paper concludes by discussing two broader processes set in motion by the Zapatista uprising. These refer to the mobilisation of significant sectors of Mexican civil society in support of political democratisation and the resurgence of militant *campesino* activism in the form of large-scale land invasions.

Modernisation and institutional reforms

The rural social sector in Chiapas

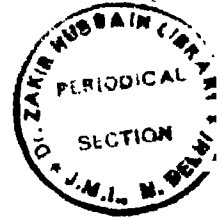
Any analysis of the implications of the rural reforms for *campesino* agriculture must begin with an understanding of the conditions of the social sector. Table 1 provides a general panorama for the state of Chiapas, using official data from 1988.⁶ From these data we can gain a picture of the relatively poor level of

TABLE 1
The social sector in Chiapas in 1988

Number of <i>ejidos</i> and <i>comunidades agrarias</i> (CA)		1 714
Number of <i>ejidatarios</i> and <i>comuneros</i>		193 515
Land surface in social sector (hectares)		3 130 892
Share of total land area in Chiapas		41.4%
Land use in the social sector	hectares	% of sector
agriculture	1 278 147	40.8
forestry	700 381	22.4
pasture	923 182	29.5
other uses	229 182	7.3
rain-fed area	1 225 831	95.9
irrigated area	52 316	4.1
Principal crop cultivated	No of <i>ejidos</i> and CAs	
maize	1264	
coffee	349	
sugar cane	19	
soy beans	16	
beans	8	
green vegetables	8	
rice	3	
Inputs in the social sector	No of <i>ejidos</i> and CAs	% of sector
farm installations	495	28.9
tractors	318	18.6
agroindustry equipment	206	12.0
credit	951	55.5
public services	1390	81.1

The number of *ejidos* and *comunidades agrarias* in Chiapas increased by 358 in 1989-92, to 2072 (PROCEDE, op cit, p 10).

Source: INEGI, 1991



development of *ejidos* and *comunidades agrarias* in Chiapas. Virtually all the sector is dedicated to rain-fed agriculture. If we calculate that each of the almost 200 000 *ejidatarios* or *comuneros* has five or six dependents, the population we are referring to is over one million persons, occupying a little over three million hectares of land, of which only 40.8% is classified as good for agricultural use. Maize is clearly the principal crop for most *ejidos* and *comunidades agrarias*, followed by coffee. However, the figures do not indicate the combination of crops within each *ejido*. Survey data for 1990 also revealed that 44.6% of *ejidatarios* possessed between 0.1 and 4.0 hectares and 42% had plots between 4.1 and 10.0 hectares.⁷ In the Altos region, the average plot size is two hectares.

In terms of opportunities to convert to new cash crops, it should be noted that the 16 *ejidos* which produced soy beans were all located in the more developed Soconusco region. Ten per cent of *ejidos* in the Soconusco also had access to irrigation. Regarding the limited use of inputs, we can add that the category of 'public services' tends to present a somewhat distorted picture of reality. This rubric includes electricity, drinking water, paved and unpaved roads. The fact that three-quarters of the *ejidos* reported that they had unpaved roads (1224) hardly constitutes access to public services. A more accurate indication is given

by the low proportion which had paved roads (10%). Installation of electricity and drinking water was said to benefit 50% and 35% of *ejidos*, respectively.

According to the 1988 survey 62.5% of the rural social sector in Mexico received credit in 1988. In Chiapas the figure was given as 55.5%. The regions with the lowest proportion of credit were the Altos and the Selva (30% and 38% respectively). However, the validity of these figures is contradicted by other sources. More recent data show that, at a national level, during the period 1985–89 only 22.2% of *ejidatarios* and *comuneros* had access to credit each year, falling to 16.3% in 1990. In fact, between 1985 and 1990 62% of producers in the social sector had no access whatsoever to agricultural credit.⁸ In Chiapas the number of producers with credit for planting fell from an annual average of 20.4% in 1985–89 to 12.7% in 1990, while only 5.7% of producers received credit for machinery in 1985–90. Similarly, the Confederación Nacional Campesina (CNC) claimed that in 1987 only 43% of *ejidos* in Mexico received credit.⁹ Moreover, the Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Información (INEGI) survey gives us no indication of the amount of credit each *ejido* or *comunidad agraria* were said to have received.

At the same time that productivity of basic grains was declining, the growth of private sector commercial agriculture boomed in Chiapas. Although starting from a lower base, between 1982 and 1987 the land area dedicated to new cash crops of soy beans, peanuts, sorghum and tobacco grew by 51.4%, 64.5%, 146.8% and 194.9%, respectively. Production of these four crops grew by 150.8%, 244.1%, 144.8% and 261.2% in the same period. The more traditional export crops also continued to expand. Banana production increased by over 25%, while output of cacao and sugar cane doubled. In 1982–87 the volume of meat production also increased by over 400%, reflecting the support which ranchers found in the state government.¹⁰

The modernisation policies were continued by governor Patrocinio González Garrido (1989–93). In 1989 his government ordered the privatisation of two state-owned enterprises, the Chiapas Forestry Corporation (CORFO) and the Pujilic sugar mill.¹¹ The *Plan de Gobierno 1989–94* was also designed to promote export agriculture through improvements to port facilities at Puerto Madero and continued support for producers of sorghum, peanuts, soy beans and safflower. The most significant reforms of this period, however, concerned the two main crops produced by *campesinos* in Chiapas: coffee and maize.

Restructuring the coffee sector

For many years small coffee growers sold their crop to a state agency, the Instituto Nacional Mexicano del Café (INMECAFE). INMECAFE was established in 1958 to carry out research and provide technical support. As part of Echeverría's strategy to modernise small-scale production and increase the state's presence in regional markets, the functions of INMECAFE were expanded in 1973. It was given a central role in organising and financing coffee production, as well as guaranteeing the purchase and export of the harvest. By the end of the 1970s it had managed to displace several important intermediaries and purchased half the domestic supply. In Chiapas, this conjuncture allowed for the emergence of new

TABLE 2
Distribution of coffee producers by plot size Chiapas
and Mexico

<i>Plot size (hectares)</i>	<i>Chiapas</i>	<i>Mexico</i>
up to 2	48 762	194 538
2-5	18 248	64 377
5-10	5 102	17 881
10-20	1 202	4 291
20-50	208	808
50-100	104	246
over 100	116	178
Total	73 742	282 319

Source: INMECAFE, 1992

producer cooperatives and Uniones de Ejidos (UE) in both the Altos and Selva regions.

With the economic crisis of the 1980s the position of INMECAFE declined. Its share of the market fell from 44% in 1982-83 to just 9.6% in 1987-88.¹² Like many of the state agencies in this period, it suffered from internal inefficiencies, corruption and mismanagement. By 1988 INMECAFE had an accumulated debt of some US\$90 million.

The response of the Salinas government in 1989 was to begin the process of privatisation. INMECAFE immediately withdrew from purchasing and marketing and reduced its provision of technical assistance. Although the reform was originally designed to include the producer organisations in the transfer of infrastructure, the plan lacked the necessary political will and much of the infrastructure lay idle or passed into private ownership.

In 1988 there were 194 000 coffee growers in Mexico, cultivating over 560 000 hectares in 12 states. The skewed nature of production units in this sector is well-known. Some 71% of growers have plots of less than two hectares. Another 20.6% have areas of between two and five hectares, while just 2% have over 10 hectares.¹³

Chiapas, Mexico's principal coffee producing state, presents a similar pattern. Here 73 742 growers occupy 228 264 hectares of land. Over 90% of producers have less than five hectares, while 116 private owners possess 12% of the area under coffee cultivation (Table 2). In the Selva region, of the almost 17 000 producers, 93% have plots of less than two hectares.¹⁴

In June 1989 the International Coffee Organization failed to agree on production quotas, causing the world price to fall by 50%. In the ensuing period the Mexican government did not support efforts by other Latin American countries to reestablish a quota system and increase the price paid to producers. Another consequence of Salinas's macroeconomic reforms which hurt coffee producers was the overvalued peso. Potential export earnings which might have offset lower world prices were lost as a result. Between December 1987 and December 1993 domestic inflation increased by 89.3% while the exchange rate increased by under 50%. As a result, the cost of inputs rose faster than the principal source

of income. In addition, in the absence of INMECAFE, marketing costs had to be absorbed by the producers themselves, or alternatively through the reappearance of unregulated private intermediaries, known as 'coyotes'.¹⁵

Following the 1989 crisis it took over three years of negotiations and mobilisations by producer groups before the government agreed to an emergency support programme. With less income and the simultaneous reduction of credit thousands of growers were unable to invest in their crop. Both productivity and total output in the social sector fell by around 35% between 1989 and 1993. On average, small producers suffered a 70% drop in income in the same period.¹⁶ Most producers were caught in a cycle of debt and poverty. Unable to repay loans because of the fall in prices and income, they became ineligible for new loans. The accumulation of debts in this sector reached around \$270 million by the end of 1993. In these conditions thousands of small growers in Chiapas abandoned production in 1989-93.

Basic grains and trade liberalisation

Another of the institutional reforms concerned the restructuring of state intervention in support of basic grain production and marketing. As with coffee, Chiapas is Mexico's largest maize producing state. The reform process began with the onset of the debt crisis in 1982. Under the administration of Miguel de la Madrid, governmental subsidies to the agricultural sector decreased on average by 13% annually, after having increased by 12.5% per year during the 1970s. Maize producers faced higher input costs and declining access to credit. By 1987 the Banco Nacional de Crédito Rural (Banrural) provided credit for only 37% of the area under maize cultivation and 43% in the case of beans. In contrast it financed 52% of the land area dedicated to soy beans and 49% of sorghum cultivation.¹⁷ Peso devaluation made inputs more costly, but producers were partly protected by the guaranteed prices which more-or-less increased in line with inflation in 1983-86.¹⁸

This situation began to deteriorate with the signing of the Pacto para la Estabilidad y el Crecimiento Económico (PECE) in December 1987.¹⁹ The Pacto was primarily designed to control inflation which reached almost 200% in 1987. The various renewals of the Pacto have been aimed at controlling wages and prices, as well as limiting further devaluation of the peso. Although inflation was brought down to under 20% by 1991, the agricultural sector suffered disproportionately. The real value of guaranteed maize prices fell behind the rate of increase in input costs. As a result, the proportion of maize producers operating at a loss jumped from 43% in 1987 to 65% in 1988.²⁰

In Chiapas, the withdrawal of state support had a negative effect not only on output and productivity but also on the environment. In the Selva region many *campesinos*, unable to capitalise their production, continued to clear forested land for subsistence needs. Tropical soils are notoriously unsuited for sustainable agriculture once the biomass has been destroyed. The land may be good for just three or four crops before it is turned into pasture for grazing and the process of deforestation begins anew. Thus, although the land area in Chiapas dedicated to maize increased by 20.6% between 1982 and 1987 (from 600 374 to 795 053

hectares), output of this crop in the same period fell by 19.6% (from 1.5 million to 1.25 million metric tons). The same trend was observed for beans. Land area increased by 10% but output dropped by 18%. Coffee displayed a slight increase in output but this is probably explained by the performance of the large plantations.²¹

The Salinas administration accelerated these trends with a series of institutional reforms in 1989. These reforms were also closely related to the World Bank's prescriptions for Mexican agriculture. The Bank conditioned the disbursement of new structural adjustment loans to a radical overhaul of the agricultural sector, recommending the privatisation of state-owned enterprises and the gradual elimination of price supports and other input subsidies.²²

On the positive side the reforms dealt a blow to corrupt functionaries and inefficient operating procedures. The new discourse of consensus-building, or *concertación*, was initially welcomed by *campesino* organisations who had been complaining about bureaucratic delays and political manipulation for many years. However, the reforms were not accompanied by the type of financial and marketing support required to reactivate the rural economy. Instead, in most cases, they appeared simply as a means to abandon small-scale producers, all within the discourse of shared responsibilities and *concertación*.²³ As a result, although *campesinos* were generally glad to see the disappearance in 1989 of the notoriously corrupt Aseguradora Nacional Agrícola y Ganadera (ANAGSA), it also left many without crop insurance. In the same year the Banrural stopped all lending to producers in default. This decision particularly affected those maize producers who until the Pacto had managed to maintain the productivity levels of the previous decade. New credit provided through the Programa Nacional de Solidaridad (PRONASOL, later known as Solidaridad) covered only half the production costs in this sector.

The transition to the free market in rural Mexico was governed by macroeconomic decision-making far removed from the realities of the *campesinos*. By the end of 1989 it was clear that the future of the agricultural sector would be subordinated to the economic goals of the Salinas administration: the reduction of inflation via wage and price controls, privatisation of state enterprises and trade liberalisation. After 1989 only maize and beans continued to receive a guaranteed price. For other grains, such as sorghum, soy beans, rice, barley, wheat and safflower, guaranteed prices were replaced with a new scheme whereby prices were fixed through negotiations between the government, producers and buyers. However, the new scheme was implemented at the same time that import licenses were removed. This had catastrophic effects for many *ejidatarios*. In 1990, for example, thousands of soy bean and sorghum producers were unable to sell their crop thanks to the sudden inflow of cheaper grains from the USA. *Campesinos* in Sonora, Guanajuato and Tamaulipas protested by seizing government warehouses and blocking highways. In the case of sorghum, the final price which producers received was 20% lower than what had been agreed through the new scheme. Many switched back to maize production as all grain prices were depressed by the availability of cheap imports. This phenomenon extended to the entire agricultural sector.

The relative protection of maize and beans production was finally

subordinated to the imperatives of free trade. Despite opposition from all national campesino organisations, the two crops were included in the negotiations leading to the NAFTA. Recognising maize and beans as 'sensitive crops' in the new free trade area, NAFTA provides for a 15-year phase-out of tariffs and import quotas. The rationale for NAFTA is that each country and region should produce goods and services in which they have comparative advantages. This argument implied that over two million small producers in Mexico could not continue to survive as maize producers. Average yields in Mexico are 1.7 metric tons per hectare, compared to 6.9 metric tons in the USA. Disparities in terms of technological development, subsidies, infrastructure and climatological factors also place Mexican producers at a great disadvantage.²⁴ These points were obviously not lost on the Zapatistas who timed their rebellion to coincide with the entry into effect of NAFTA.

In determining how many maize producers would lose from free trade, the crucial issue became the fixing of new pricing mechanisms. Under NAFTA the Mexican government decided that guaranteed prices would have to be phased out, allowing the international price gradually to take its place. After several months of debate, in October 1993 Salinas announced the Programa Nacional de Apoyos Directos al Campo (PROCAMPO), described by the Secretaría de Agricultura y Recursos Hidráulicos (SARH) as 'a new support program for the Mexican farm sector'.²⁵

PROCAMPO and pricing policy for maize

What were the main objectives of PROCAMPO and what implications did they represent for maize producers in Chiapas? Under PROCAMPO over 3.3 million producers of seven crops were made eligible for direct payments to be made on a per hectare basis.²⁶ All those who had planted one of these crops during the period between December 1990 and December 1993 and who had been included in a national directory compiled by SARH during 1993 could request payment of 330 new pesos (equivalent to \$103) for each hectare cultivated during the Autumn–Winter crop cycle of 1993–94. The payments were due to be made at harvest time in March 1994. One of the distinguishing features of PROCAMPO is that it included 2.2 million farmers who produce solely for their own family's subsistence needs and had been isolated from official support, especially credit.

At first sight it would appear that campesinos in the Altos and Selva regions stand to gain from this new subsidy. These are maize deficit areas and the lowering of maize prices should theoretically lead to a reduction of hunger, especially in the Altos where yields can be as low as 0.5 metric tons per hectare. The most negatively affected groups instead appear to be small and medium-sized *ejidos* in the Frailesca and Centro regions who depend on maize sales for a significant part of their income. This is not an insignificant sector. The proportion of total maize output in Chiapas which is sold on the market is twice as high as that consumed by the family unit. According to the SARH-CEPAL survey, 67% of maize production within the social sector of Chiapas is sold on the market, while 33% goes to household consumption.²⁷ NAFTA and lower maize

prices will therefore have a direct effect on thousands of producers that until 1994 depended on the guaranteed price.

In the case of poorer producers in the Altos and Selva, the potentially positive effects of falling prices may be cancelled out by political factors. In many remote districts local *caciques* exercise monopolistic control over transportation and marketing. Prices in Ocosingo or Altamirano may not come to reflect international prices at all if local merchants regulate the amount of maize available for purchase and at what price. In the absence of governmental regulation one possible alternative is to help grassroots organisations develop their own food purchasing and distribution cooperatives, but this would require the type of political decision that has traditionally been lacking in Chiapas.

For its part, the PROCAMPO subsidy is generally seen as a palliative in the Altos and Selva. The payments are simply used for any of several urgent necessities, such as obtaining food, clothing or medical attention rather than providing a stimulus for production. In this way the subsidy tends to find its way back into the hands of the local merchants and private intermediaries, who in turn control prices and distribution of basic goods. In sum, the changes in maize pricing policy may turn out to benefit merchants more than rural producers or consumers.

In the area of conflict the phasing out of guaranteed prices was seen as another indication of declining government support for *ejido* agriculture rather than representing a positive step to reduce food prices for consumers. Further research is necessary to determine the precise impact of these changes as the tariffs on maize imports are phased out. The results may also determine the level of political support for the government and its rural reforms if the problem of hunger is seen to be improving or deteriorating under the new rules.

Solidaridad and Political Control

The rural reforms were accompanied by the further expansion of Solidaridad, which was established by Salinas in December 1988 (and called originally PRONASOL) and became incorporated within the Secretaría de Desarrollo Social (SEDESOL) in 1992. Although Chiapas received more funds from Solidaridad than any other state, several observers noted that the resources were insufficient to ameliorate extensive and increasing poverty. A central limitation was that support for the production and marketing needs of the social sector was not given sufficient emphasis within the programme.

According to official figures, over 50% of the population suffers from malnutrition, one of the highest rates in the country. The state's illiteracy rate (30%) is three times higher than the national average, while the proportion of children who do not complete primary school is 62%, compared to 21% nationally. Overcrowded housing conditions affect around 80% of homes in the municipalities of Ocosingo, Altamirano and Las Margaritas. Other services are equally lacking (see Table 3).

Solidaridad expenditure in Chiapas grew by 130% in 1989-90, 50% in 1990-91, 20% in 1991-92 and a further 1% in 1992-93. Most of the funding was designed to improve social welfare and public works, with only 12% going

TABLE 3
Indices of poverty in Chiapas

	Percentage of homes without		
	electricity	drinking water	drainage
Mexico	12.5	20.6	36.4
Chiapas	33.1	41.6	58.8
Ocosingo	67.9	49.2	60.2
Altamirano	75.0	48.8	43.7
Las Margaritas	66.4	72.7	38.5

Sources: Data for Mexico and Chiapas are from INEGI, 1992. Data for Ocosingo, Altamirano and Las Margaritas are drawn from the Consejo Nacional de Población (CONAPO), as cited in *La Jornada*, 3 January 1994, p. 11.

to support productive activities. This is especially important if we consider the impact of the rural reforms referred to above. In fact, according to the Coordinadora Nacional de Organizaciones Cafetaleras (CNOCA) the amount of credit which coffee growers received from Solidaridad in 1993 was 13% less than in 1988 when INMECAFE was still operating.²⁸ Landlessness and unemployment, especially among the young, have not been cushioned by Solidaridad. Under the programme, each project has a low investment ceiling, allowing the government to reach a larger population with small projects but reducing their overall social impact. Proponents of a new anti-poverty programme argue that larger projects, co-managed with representative local and regional social organisations, should instead be designed to attack the structural roots of poverty rather than its symptoms. Such a strategy would also bolster *campesino* organisations as counterweights to local elites. The Chiapas rebellion lends weight to this position by demonstrating both the limitations of Solidaridad itself and the need for a political opening to the benefit of *campesino* organisations in the state.

Although Chiapas ranks first in the number of local solidarity committees (8824 or 8.26% of the national total), according to Moguel the figure is misleading since it includes any type of group which has received funds from the programme.²⁹ Most of these (7474) participate in basic infrastructure and social welfare projects (Dignified Schools, Municipal Funds and Children in Solidarity). These tend either to have a short time-span between the disbursement of funds until the end of the project, or—as in the case of Municipal Funds—to be tightly controlled by the local political bosses, or *caciques*. One of the factors which contributed to divisions and unrest within indigenous communities was precisely the manipulation of Solidaridad funds by municipal presidents loyal to the PRI and the state governor.

This manipulation was promoted by governor Patrocinio González Garrido. For example, one of the programmes designed to support subsistence farmers was the Credit on Demand scheme (Crédito a la Palabra).³⁰ This involved the disbursement of interest-free loans on an individual basis (principally to maize and beans producers) which, when paid back, were meant to be recycled in the form of new loans and investment in community welfare projects. Chiapas had the distinction of being the state with the highest loan repayment rate. In 1992,

88% of loans were repaid and over 70% had been recovered in 1993. However, the supposed benefits were not distributed equitably. Although loan repayment was highest in the Altos and Selva regions, the share of the state's 'crédito a la solidaridad' which these regions received fell between 1990 and 1993 from 23% to 16% and from 17% to 6% respectively.

Part of the explanation for this paradox was the governor's political control of the programme. In other parts of Mexico the repayment of Solidaridad loans was used to generate new sources of financing for community projects. In Chiapas, by contrast, the governor created a state-level fund directly under his control. The disbursement of credit in this way favoured political allies in the PRI and CNC, strengthening the control exercised by municipal presidents and marginalising independent organisations. A state-level Ministry of Community Participation, staffed by loyal PRI and CNC leaders, was set up in early 1992 in an effort to institutionalise these arrangements.

The governor also dismissed officials who attempted to support local independent organisations. For example, in 1990 the regional director of the Instituto Nacional Indigenista (INI) in Las Margaritas was forced to resign after assisting the Unión de Ejidos de la Selva in its efforts to gain Solidaridad funding to purchase a coffee processing plant from INMECAFE. Then in March 1992 three top INI officials in Chiapas were arrested: the state director and the regional director and treasurer for the Tzeltal area. They were accused of corruption in the use of funds to support small-scale livestock activities in Ocosingo and Chilón. Local *campesino* leaders came out in their defence, arguing that their only crime was to have supported the projects of independent groups. Although they were later released none could return to their previous posts.³¹

Solidaridad as a whole was not such a threat to González Garrido as he had feared. Yet his political aims compounded the programme's own limitations and contributed to the anger which would be directed by the EZLN against municipal presidents. One of the immediate repercussions of the uprising was the resignation of the state delegate of SEDESOL in January 1994. The new interim governor, Javier López Moreno also announced his intention to meet municipal authorities to investigate the misuse of Solidaridad funds. During the first week of February 1994 several town halls were occupied by *campesino* groups calling for the dismissal of municipal presidents.³²

Ejido reform and the agrarian question in chiapas

The most disputed of Salinas's rural reforms was the decision to modify Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution. This article enshrined the central gains of the Zapatistas in the 1910–17 Revolution and laid the basis for agrarian reform over the next 70 years. By 1991 there were a total of 29 951 *ejidos* and *comunidades agrarias* in Mexico, representing half the country's land surface and 3.5 million families, or 20 million people, equivalent to a quarter of the country's population.³³ Before considering the precise nature of the reforms and how they were perceived in Chiapas it is important to understand the centrality of agrarian struggles in shaping *campesino* consciousness in the state.

Land reform, campesino struggles and repression, 1982–1993

Land reform in Mexico followed different patterns according to local and regional factors. In Chiapas political resistance to redistribution originated in the pacts made between local elites and the post-revolutionary governments of the centre. During 1914–1920 lowland ranchers and estate owners organised a successful counter-revolution and one of their leaders, Tiburcio Fernández Ruiz, became governor in 1920.³⁴ He decreed that individual private owners would be allowed to keep up to 8000 hectares of land.³⁵ Major changes were not seen until the Cárdenas presidency (1934–40) but even then the new beneficiaries received generally marginal land of low productivity or became a captive labour market for large coffee plantations.³⁶ Outside of this exceptional conjuncture, agrarian reform in Chiapas was never based on the actual redistribution of private holdings but on colonisation of unused forested areas in the Selva region.³⁷

During the 1970s and 1980s an increase in land invasions was met with violent repression but the government was also forced to purchase land from large owners for the purpose of redistribution.³⁸ As in other states with high indigenous populations, in Chiapas land reform was forced back onto the political agenda in the early 1980s by the persistence of new *campesino* organisations. It would be false to say that land reform was avoided in the 1980s. A redistribution programme was in fact effective in providing over 80 000 hectares of land for over 9000 *campesinos*. However, the way in which it was implemented created more conflicts than it solved.

In 1984 the state government of Absalón Castellanos Domínguez signed agreements with the federal Agrarian Reform Minister to implement a plan to resolve land disputes in Chiapas. The plan, known as the Programa de Rehabilitación Agraria (PRA), was designed to purchase land which belonged to private owners but which had been occupied by peasants whose claims for distribution had not been resolved by the Secretaría de Reforma Agraria (SRA). These lands would then be officially given *ejido* status.

The areas chosen for 'rehabilitation' were obviously those with the greatest number of land invasions. Since these tended to be led by the independent organisations, the official CNC feared they would be strengthened and began to dispute ownership of the same lands, even carrying out its own land invasions in PRA-targeted zones. One of the most important areas for the PRA was Sinojovel on the northern edge of the Altos region. Since the mid-1970s former workers on coffee plantations had been organised by supporters of the Central Independiente de Obreros Agrícolas y Campesinos (CIOAC). By 1981 the CIOAC had built an important base of support and organised strikes on over 40 plantations in demand of improved working conditions, wages and respect for labour rights. When no solutions were given, the CIOAC began to press instead for the redistribution of the *fincas* into *ejidos*.³⁸ With the PRA's announcement, land which was in possession of CIOAC supporters and awaiting regularisation was then invaded by CNC supporters. Violent conflicts between the two groups became inevitable and continued well into the following administration.

The PRA targeted 41 municipalities (over a third of the state's total) grouped in six zones (the northern part of Los Altos, Fronteriza, Centro, Costa,

Frailesca and the Selva). The four municipalities that saw most redistribution were, as the programme intended, those with a recent history of land conflicts: Simojovel and Bochil in the northern Altos, Ocosingo in the Selva and Venustiano Carranza in the Centro region. However, the independent organisations in each area did not receive the share of land which corresponded to their demands or their size. In Simojovel and Bochil the CIOAC received title to 16 *ejidos*, compared to 30 for the CNC. In Ocosingo 17 *ejidos* were distributed among *campesinos* without affiliation but promoted by the CNC, compared to only one for the largest independent group in the area, the Unión de Uniones Ejidales y Grupos Campesinos Solidarios de Chiapas (UU). In Venustiano Carranza the Organización Campesina Emiliano Zapata (OCEZ) did not receive any land at all under the PRA. Rather than solve disputes the PRA had the effect of transforming conflicts between *campesinos* and landowners into conflicts between independent organisations and the CNC.⁴⁰

The principal beneficiaries of the PRA were the landowners and some agrarian reform officials. On the one hand, the former received payment for land which they had resigned themselves to losing anyway. In the process the conflict for them had been defused as different groups of *campesinos* now battled with each other over land ownership. On the other, the programme provided opportunities for corruption and personal enrichment. Landowners invented 'land invasions' on their property, appealing to the state government to purchase the disputed land. Some officials colluded by paying out 'compensation' for lands which were never to be distributed and, as part of the corruption, retained some of the money for themselves. The programme was suspended in the summer of 1985, less than a year after it had begun, when the federal government ordered an investigation. In order to show that the PRA was still necessary the state government began to evict members of the UU from allegedly disputed lands in Ocosingo. In August 1985 four communities were evicted by state police, leading to protests and a march by over 2000 Tzeltal Indians to Tuxtla Gutiérrez. The UU was able to uphold its argument that the communities in question already had legal documents. However, the PRA did return in 1985 and continued until its \$100 million budget expired in 1987.

Land petitioners also came up against increasing repression. State police and local CNC groups were involved in numerous attacks on members of independent organisations. In October 1984 nine OCEZ members were killed in an ambush by CNC supporters in Venustiano Carranza. In the following year two demonstrations by CIOAC and OCEZ were violently broken up by state police. The CIOAC also blamed CNC members for the murder of one of their lawyers, Andulio Gálvez, at the command of Ernesto Castellanos, brother of the state governor, in August 1985. Nor were CNC leaders who opposed the government treated any differently. In May 1986, Germán Jiménez, a former PRI deputy and CNC leader, was arrested and imprisoned for his part in protests by thousands of maize producers demanding higher crop prices. Finally, in December 1987 seven people were killed when Security Police broke up demonstrations by OCEZ and CIOAC peasants at the municipal palaces of Simojovel and La Independencia. At the same time police ransacked a house in Comitán used by Maryknoll nuns who had allegedly

supported the protests. Evictions of alleged land invaders increased as the administration drew to a close.

The Castellanos Domínguez government also helped protect private landowners from possible expropriation by issuing more *certificados de inafectabilidad* (documents of inafectability) than all the previous state governors combined. The main beneficiaries were the private ranchers who were issued with 4714 certificates, equivalent to 95% of the total number distributed in the state since 1934. By the end of this administration at least 70% of the area used by cattle ranchers was legally beyond the reach of agrarian reform.⁴¹

When a new governor took office in December 1988 many hoped that a more conciliatory approach would replace the repression. In his electoral campaign Patrocinio González Garrido echoed the *salinista* discourse of consensus-building. However, the first three months of his administration saw the assassination of several members of independent organisations, including two of the principal *campesino* leaders in the state: Sebastián Pérez Núñez of the CIOAC and Arturo Albores Velasco of the OCEZ. González Garrido denied government involvement but human rights activists criticised the impunity of these and other actions. Nevertheless, the governor was forced to address the agrarian question.

In 1989 seven cases were targeted for negotiated solutions. These involved the return of communal lands in Venustiano Carranza, Nicolás Ruiz and Villa Corzo, and the titling of *ejido* land in El Carrizal (Ocosingo), San Sebastián Bachajón (Chilón), Unión Calera (Arriaga) and San Juan Chamula. Although these cases were partially resolved, there were another 547 cases still awaiting resolution in 1989, representing 22 598 land claimants.⁴² Furthermore, although the governor had to deal with independent organisations in resolving these cases, once the agreements had been made no further opening was offered. On the contrary, as land conflicts continued to occur throughout the state, the governor reverted to the traditionally repressive tactics of his predecessors.

For example, several settlements in the municipality of Chiapa de Corzo were destroyed by state police and landowners on two separate occasions in April 1990 and April 1991. Members of the OCEZ claimed that the disputed lands were in fact covered by a presidential resolution in their favour. In June 1990 six people were injured when private gunmen shot at a crowd of over 100 cane producers who were demanding full payment for cane delivered to the Pujilic sugar mill. In July of the same year women from the highland settlement of San Felipe Ecatepec staged a hunger strike in Mexico City's Zócalo to demand a hearing with the President. They protested against the repression of their organisation, the Coordinadora Nacional de Pueblos Indígenas (CNPI) at the hands of the state government. In October 1990 two members of OCEZ were injured when unknown assailants opened fire on a peaceful march from Venustiano Carranza to Tuxtla Gutiérrez.⁴³

In July 1991 a protest march by 300 Indians from the Selva Lacandona was broken up by police in Palenque using clubs and tear gas grenades. Seven leaders were arrested and forced to sign confessions linking them to Central American guerrillas and drug trafficking. They were protesting at the illegal confiscation of timber by state police and the corruption of municipal authorities.⁴⁴ Finally, in September 1991 the parish priest of Simojovel, Joel Padrón,

was arrested on charges of robbery, damage to property and provocations. The roots of what became a political conflict between the state government and the local Catholic Church were to be found in the type of conflicts generated by the PRA. *Campesinos* belonging to a CNC group claimed that members of the CIOAC had evicted them from their land with the help of Joel Padrón. The state government attempted to condition the release of Padrón to a series of commitments from the Bishop of San Cristóbal, Mgr Samuel Ruiz García, to order the eviction of alleged land invasions and declare his opposition to actions against private property. Ruiz was also requested to drop charges against police for the illegal detention of Joel Padrón and to order Padrón to leave Chiapas once released.⁴⁵ Although these conditions were not accepted and charges against Padrón were eventually dropped, they were a clear indication of the governor's openness to the demands of ranchers and landowners. They also reaffirmed the central role of Samuel Ruiz, the Diocese of San Cristóbal and the Centro de Derechos Humanos 'Fray Bartolomé de las Casas' in defending indigenous rights.

Political pressure against the Church increased in 1993. In March of that year two soldiers were killed in the Tzotzil community of San Isidro El Ocotal in Los Altos. Members of the community feared that the clandestine use of local timber would be discovered by the army and the two soldiers were mistakenly identified as forestry agents.⁴⁶ The Centro de Derechos Humanos 'Fray Bartolomé de las Casas' denounced the killings but also denounced the abuse of human rights carried out by soldiers in the arrest of 13 suspects who were allegedly subjected to torture. Police returned to the community on two further occasions in April and May 1993 and carried out further illegal arrests and beatings. The original 13 were eventually released without charges being brought against them.⁴⁷ During the rest of 1993 political pressure against the Diocese of San Cristóbal increased, culminating in the efforts of the Papal representative to remove Samuel Ruiz from his position in Chiapas. The outbreak of the rebellion frustrated this move as Ruiz became a key mediator in negotiations between the EZLN and the government.

The ejido reform and potential effects in Chiapas

The reforms to Article 27 of the Constitution were proposed in November 1991 and adopted just two months later. They were followed in late February 1992 by the passage of a new Agrarian Law to establish the new regulatory framework for the social sector. For the government the modifications were seen as necessary steps to attract private investment in agriculture and increase productivity and welfare. Four of the main changes embodied in the new Agrarian Law were the following:

1. Ejidatarios were given the legal right to purchase, sell, rent or use as collateral the individual plots and communal lands which make up the *ejido*.
2. Private companies were allowed to purchase land in accordance with the legal limits ascribed to different crops. At a maximum, a company with at

- least 25 individual share-holders could purchase holdings of up to 25 times the size of the individually permitted limit.
3. The reforms also allowed for new associations between capitalists and *ejidatarios*, the latter providing land as 'T' shares in joint ventures.
 4. In line with the reform's intention of guaranteeing security for private property, the sections of Article 27 which allowed for *campesinos* to petition for land redistribution were deleted from the new law.

The debate surrounding the *ejido* reform raised several concerns. First, it was feared that the sale of *ejido* plots could lead to a reconcentration of land. Although the new law expressly forbids *latifundios* in Mexico, it also potentially allows for private companies of at least 25 individuals to own farms of up to 2500 hectares of irrigated land, 5000 hectares in the case of rain-fed areas, 10 000 hectares of good quality pasture land or 20 000 hectares of forested land. A company made up of 25 ranchers could also feasibly own an area equivalent to 12 500 hectares. In order for *ejido* land to be made available for private ownership, however, the assembly of *ejido* members must approve the measure by a two-thirds majority. Some commentators noted that the traditional control and manipulation of assemblies by *ejido* authorities could lead to forced votes in favour of privatisation.⁴⁸ In Chiapas the potential for land reconcentration is given by the politically powerful ranchers' associations, representing over 12 000 *ganaderos* organised in 60 local associations. Ranchers applauded the reforms to Article 27, arguing that greater security in land tenure would attract foreign investors wishing to create new meat processing plants in the region. The competition for land with indigenous *campesinos* should be understood in this context.⁴⁹

Second, the use of land as collateral or in association with private investors involved the risk of farm foreclosures and loss of land rights. The effective exclusion of much of the social sector from traditional sources of credit could influence the decisions of *ejidatarios* in putting up land as collateral. Women were placed at most risk since the male head of the household could unilaterally decide how to dispose of what was family patrimony. The only special right which women received was the first option to buy the *ejido* land which their spouses decided to sell. In Chiapas it is possible that wealthier *ejidatarios* might concentrate land within communities as a result of foreclosures.

Finally, it was feared that most of the unresolved land petitions (known as the *rezago agrario*) would simply be rejected. The government's claim that there was no more land to be distributed was contested by several organisations. Some called for an investigation into private holdings which allegedly exceeded the legal limits, before decreeing the end to land redistribution. It is significant that this demand was taken up by the campesino movement in Chiapas and reasserted in light of the Zapatista rebellion.⁵⁰ In fact, rather than providing for the immediate expropriation and redistribution of excess holdings, the new law gave private owners one year to sell off excess property.⁵¹ The end of land reform in Chiapas and other states also cancelled out the hope of a piece of land for thousands of *campesinos*. In this respect, we should distinguish between effects

which are directly measurable in terms of land purchases, etc and those which operate more at the level of expectations, hopes and fears. It seems clear that the end of land reform constituted a symbolic break with the past but one which offered no guarantees of improvement for the future.

The ejido reform in Chiapas

As in most areas of rural Mexico, the immediate response to Salinas's announcement of *ejido* reform was one of fear and confusion. Information about the precise nature of the reforms was scarce and the immediate problems facing *ejidatarios* were increasing debts, falling prices for their crops and the lack of credit. However, two demonstrations against the reforms were held in December 1991 and January 1992. The first was led by the OCEZ in Venustiano Carranza, the second by the Asociación Rural de Interés Colectivo Unión de Uniones (ARIC) in Ocosingo. The members of the ARIC also made a formal commitment not to sell *ejido* land.

The Diocese of San Cristóbal also invited different organisations to reflect on the reforms at a special workshop held in January 1992. The workshop concluded that the *ejido* reform was part of the government's general strategy in favour of private capital; the spirit of the original law had been broken as the public interest was subordinated to individual interests; that the reconcentration of land in few hands was likely; and that it reflected the objectives of the proposed NAFTA. In political, economic and cultural terms the workshop saw only a deterioration of existing conditions. A more specific fear referred to the deepening of divisions within communities as village *caciques* moved to buy up land from poorer neighbours.⁵²

The direct effects of *ejido* reform were only gradually emerging by the end of 1993. According to officials of the Registro Agrario Nacional (RAN) only 100 of the state's 2072 *ejidos* had requested the assistance of the government's certification programme PROCEDE.⁵³ The main problem with the reform concerned the lack of solution to a backlog of land petitions (the *rezago agrario*). Although in 1992 the state government announced that it would purchase land in order to deal with the *rezago*, the programme did not advance. *Campesino* leaders blamed the delays on bureaucratic inefficiency, the reluctance of private owners to sell and collusion between functionaries and landowners.

In the Selva region the lack of definitive titles is a major problem for many communities. Not only does the lack of legal definition increase the possibility of eviction by landowners or other *campesino* groups, it also restricts access to credit. This obstacle hindered those *ejidos* which began to devote more land area to livestock in the 1980s.⁵⁴ The lack of secure titles further weakened the social organisations located in the area of rebellion.

The ARIC Unión de Uniones was particularly affected. During 1992 its leaders proposed several measures to deal with the agrarian problem. In addition to its existing legal petitions, the ARIC offered to buy land and asked for the redistribution of private estates which had been declared bankrupt. None of these proposals was taken up by the state government. For the president of the ARIC, the reason was a familiar one: 'the agrarian authorities are friends of the

landowners. They carry out their studies and reject our petitions. In this past year we have got nowhere. The landowners are refusing to sell and the Agraria says the ranchers all have documents protecting themselves from expropriation. This is the case in Patihuitz, Avellanal and La Estrella.⁵⁵ It is no coincidence that the EZLN has been able to recruit campesinos in precisely these sub-regions of the Selva.

Grassroots organising and *campesino* radicalism

The EZLN was able to gain support from thousands of Tzeltal, Tzotzil, Zoque, Chol and Tojolobal Indians in the Altos and Selva regions. It was not a movement implanted from outside but the most recent expression of popular organising and resistance to elite manipulation, government indifference and police brutality. It drew support from *campesinos* who had participated over several years in legal organisations which sought to defend land rights and obtain more favourable terms for marketing their coffee. It was the denial of political space to these organisations which allowed for the armed option to gain acceptance.

Colonisation and social organisation in the Selva

The largest base of support for the EZLN came from indigenous communities located in the Selva region. Many of these had been established over a period of 40 years of colonisation. The flow of migrants to the Selva began in the 1930s but increased rapidly after 1950. Colonisation was encouraged as a means to avoid affecting the interests of private owners in other parts of Chiapas. By 1970 an estimated 100 000 migrants had settled in the region, principally Tzeltal, Chol and Tojolobal Indians. These were former plantation workers from the northern and eastern highlands or *campesinos* who had lost land as a result of the encroachments of local elites.⁵⁶ The population of Ocosingo, the region's largest municipality, more than doubled between 1950 and 1970, doubled again in 1970-80 and grew by another 56% in 1980-90.⁵⁷

As a result of colonisation the area controlled by large estates declined, while the *ejido* sector increased its presence. Between 1930 and 1991 over 1.3 million hectares were distributed among 25 000 *campesinos* in Ocosingo, Altamirano and Las Margaritas.⁵⁸ Ranchers continued to dominate the region's economy, however, since they controlled the best pasture lands, most of the cattle and capital. With the crisis in coffee production many of the *ejidos* also turned to raising livestock in association with private ranchers. In 1990 a survey of 3500 *campesino* families in the region found that 60% of land had been converted to pasture, 30% was used for maize and beans and only 10% was dedicated to coffee.⁵⁹ Many *campesinos* came to depend on ranchers for temporary work on estates, to clear new areas of pasture land or enter into cooperative associations.⁶⁰ However, as with coffee, livestock also proved to be vulnerable to the economic reforms, trade liberalisation and cheaper imports. In addition, between 1980 and 1990 demographic growth in this region exceeded that for the state as a whole. Whereas the average annual rate for Chiapas in this period was 4.4%,

the rate for Ocosingo was 5.6% and for Las Margaritas 7.4%. Altamirano registered a slightly lower rate of 3.4%.⁶¹

The first institutions to organise the colonists in the Selva Lacandona were religious bodies. From the 1940s Protestant missionaries associated with the Summer Institute of Linguistics were invited by the government to assist in the acculturation of the region's indigenous population.⁶² Traditional cultural practices were discouraged, while individual effort and conversion to new crops were promoted. Government support for Protestant sects continued in subsequent decades as it attempted to limit the influence of Catholic priests and liberation theology. The region's population which considered itself Protestant increased from less than 5% in 1960 to 25% in 1990.⁶³

Catholic missionaries began to work in the Selva in the late 1960s, but adopted a different approach to that of their Protestant counterparts. Their priests and catechists sought to rescue and restore the centrality of indigenous traditions and practices and fostered the formation of local cooperatives. This approach reflected the 'preferential option for the poor' which the Diocese of San Cristóbal had begun to promote at the time of the Medellín Council of Latin American Bishops in 1968. Mgr Samuel Ruiz, Bishop of the Diocese since 1960, participated in the Medellín conference and became an important proponent of an autochthonous, popular Church.

Before Medellín the Diocese had already begun to adapt its own structures, creating special teams of priests assigned to regions inhabited by the four largest indigenous groups (Tzeltal, Tzotzil, Chol and Tojolobal) and two predominantly mestizo areas in the centre and border regions. This reorganisation proved to be important when, in 1971, the state government requested that the Church organise an Indian Congress to commemorate the quincentenary of the death of Fray Bartolomé de las Casas. Preparation for the Congress involved the formation of community-level groups to elaborate their specific complaints, demands and proposals around the four main issues of land tenure, marketing, education and health. The Church invited students and professors to assist catechists in providing courses in agrarian law, economics, Mexican history and agronomy. Out of this process a new generation of indigenous community leaders emerged with a different perspective on the causes of poverty and injustice. Whereas conflicts had previously been understood in terms of personal relations, the participants in the Congress began to see the broader structural forces at work.

The Congress was held in San Cristóbal de las Casas in October 1974. Present were 587 Tzeltal delegates, 330 Tzotziles, 152 Tojolobales and 161 Choles, representing 327 communities.⁶⁴ On agrarian matters, delegates demanded the titling of *ejido* and communal land and denounced encroachment by ranchers. Plantation workers, newly aware of their labour rights, demanded respect for the provisions of the Federal Labor Code such as the minimum wage. Others called for greater access to markets, complaining how local intermediaries controlled credit, prices and transportation. Delegates also demanded education in their own languages and the defence of indigenous cultures. Finally, poor sanitation and the lack of medical services and clinics outside the main towns were denounced as responsible for high indices of disease and infant mortality, which was estimated at 42 deaths per 1000 births in 1970.⁶⁵

Maoism in the Selva

The Congress proved to be a catalyst for grassroots organising in the Altos and Selva. Its impact was felt most in the Selva region. This was probably because of the weaker presence of governmental institutions outside the central highlands. In the central part of the Altos the INI, CNC and PRI had succeeded in undermining traditional forms of indigenous organisation and in extending vertical and clientelistic lines of control.⁶⁶ In the more peripheral and dispersed settlements of the Selva, the Catholic priests and catechists were able to build support for more autonomous forms of representation. This is important in understanding the process of popular organisation in the Selva. The origins are more social than institutional. Organisation followed an intense period of political learning, achieved through a shared social and religious identification. Consequently, when the government began to promote the formation of *Uniones de Ejidos* (UE) in Chiapas, the new UEs which emerged in the Selva were not controlled by interests loyal to the PRI but by the delegates who had participated in the Indian Congress.⁶⁷ In this respect, the three most important cases were the UE 'Quiptic Ta Lecubtecel' (United by our Strength) in Tzeltal (Ocosingo), UE 'Tierra y Libertad' and UE 'Lucha Campesina' (Las Margaritas), each of which were 'formed' by the SRA in 1976.

The largest of these was the UE Quiptic which represented 18 communities located in the Valley of San Quintín, Ocosingo. Among the advisers which the Church had invited to help prepare for the Indian Congress were activists from the Maoist group, Unión del Pueblo (UP). These advisers were important in bringing to the attention of Quiptic members the possible threat of eviction facing 26 communities in the region. This was the result of a presidential resolution issued in March 1972 which gave sole land rights for over 660 000 hectares to just 66 *lacandón* families. However, the designated Comunidad Lacandona included at least 3000 Tzeltal and Chol families who had settled in the area with government approval in the previous decades. Behind the decree was an agreement between the representatives of the *lacandón* Indians and the state-owned forestry company which allowed for the latter to exploit 35 000 cubic metres of mahogany and cedar for a period of 10 years. The UP advisers began to warn of possible evictions in 1973 and this issue contributed to the decision to form the UE Quiptic.

Other advisers arrived in 1977 to organise the struggle against the land evictions. They also belonged to a Maoist political current known as Política Popular (PP) and arrived after hearing of an armed clash at Nueva Providencia, one of the threatened *ejidos*, in July 1977. The conflict had arisen when the local *cacique* kidnapped the son of an *ejidatario* who had begun to participate in the Quiptic. When the authorities failed to reply to appeals for his release a group of several hundred *ejidatarios* armed with machetes and rifles attacked the house where the boy was being kept. In the shoot-out seven police officers were killed, the *cacique* was taken prisoner and the boy freed. Groups of *campesinos* closed down nearby landing strips to avoid repression.⁶⁸

Política Popular has its roots in the 1968 student movement and its principal leader was Adolfo Oribe Berlinguer, an economics professor at the Universidad

Nacional Autónoma de México (the national university). In November 1968 Oribe wrote a pamphlet entitled 'Hacia una política popular' (Towards a Politics of the People), which criticised the traditional left in Mexico for its lack of insertion among the masses. Seeking to apply the Maoist 'mass line' to Mexico in a non-violent struggle for socialism, brigades of students went out to poor urban neighbourhoods and *ejidos* to build bases of popular power at the grassroots. The most significant advances were made in the northern cities of Monterrey, Torreón and Chihuahua and among *ejidatarios* in La Laguna and Nayarit. In 1976 the PP joined with other groups, including Unión del Pueblo, to become known as Línea Proletaria (LP), which also developed an important presence in national unions of teachers, telephone workers and metalworkers. The arrival of LP activists in Chiapas was therefore part of a broad movement to build new forms of popular organisation in Mexico. It should be explained that they did not promote armed struggle. In fact, one of their central strategic decisions, the 'política de dos caras' (politics of two faces), was to avoid confrontations with the state, earning the criticism of many on the Left who concluded that LP was *gobiernista*.

The 'norteños' from LP were not immediately accepted by the indigenous southern leaders who had the support of the Church. Sensing that the advisers were attempting to displace them as leaders they refused to cooperate and forced them to withdraw at the end of 1978. The advisers complained that the Church gave too much power to the same leaders who had been delegates at the 1974 Congress, creating a new clique rather than fostering grassroots participation. Some of the methods which the advisers tried to introduce undermined the centralisation of decision making. One was to revive a traditional element of indigenous democracy, the division of community assemblies into 'small assemblies' or *asambleas chicas*. These were each made up of six or seven people who discussed problems or proposals which were then forwarded to the community assembly. A second strategy was to create horizontal links between the members of each community, rather than simply between the leaders or delegates. Drawing on their Maoist training they promoted contacts and exchanges between different communities at a grassroots level. Through a method known as 'de las masas a las masas', commissions were sent to inform other communities of the threat of eviction from their land. This was painstaking work, involving treks of several days to reach distant settlements.

Despite the divisions between outside advisers and local leaders, the UE Quiptic continued to grow. In March 1978 a group of 800 *campesinos* blocked further construction of a perimeter road which was designed to delineate the Comunidad Lacandona. From that moment the organisation expanded rapidly as *ejidos* to the north and east of Ocosingo also joined in the struggle to defend their land rights.

In 1979 the advisers were able to reincorporate themselves in the UE Quiptic. This was thanks to their promotion of a state-wide movement to improve the terms of coffee marketing for *campesino* producers. Two main problems were identified: the high cost of transporting coffee was absorbed by the producer and INMECAFE delayed paying producers for their crop. During 1979 several coffee growers' organisations, including the UE Quiptic, pressed INMECAFE to respond.

A partial solution was achieved in November 1979 when an accord was signed in which INMECAFE agreed to pay 50% and 100% of air and ground transport costs, respectively.

The convergence around coffee marketing culminated in the formation in September 1980 of the Unión de Uniones Ejidales y Grupos Campesinos Solidarios de Chiapas (UU). The UU brought together the three Uniones de Ejidos which had been formed in 1976 and other smaller producer groups from the Altos, Selva and Fronteriza regions. This was the first and largest independent *campesino* organisation in Chiapas, representing 12 000 mainly indigenous families from 180 communities in 11 municipalities.⁶⁹

The state government of Juan Sabines unsuccessfully attempted to coopt the leaders of the new organisation. However, internal differences between advisers split the UU into two camps in 1983. The Quiptic leaders accused Adolfo Oribe of attempting to rush through approval of the creation of a Credit Union for the UU and of bypassing internal democratic procedures. The Quiptic and two other Uniones de Ejidos pulled out of this alliance and, keeping the name Unión de Uniones, continued to work together until they formed a third-level organisation in March 1988: the ARIC Unión de Uniones. The smaller groups from the Altos and Fronteriza regions operated the Unión de Crédito Pajal Ya'Kac'Tic in San Cristóbal de las Casas.

For the UE Quiptic, participation in the UU had helped it to defend the land rights of the 26 communities still threatened with eviction. In October 1981 the UU led a march of 3000 of its members to Tuxtla Gutiérrez to demand the suspension of eviction orders. The lack of guaranteed *ejido* titles continued to undermine the efforts of the UE Quiptic to promote economic projects. This contrasted with the Pajal Credit Union which expanded its operations rapidly from 1982 until the collapse in coffee prices in 1989.

Politically, the institutionalist strategy favoured by the ARIC was increasingly seen as ineffective. Economically, the coffee sector was in crisis and ARIC had failed to develop a viable alternative in this region. The 1989 forestry ban removed another source of income. The turn to small-scale ranching demanded less labour and the fall in meat prices undercut even this activity. Finally, most of the energies of the ARIC were spent in agrarian litigation. Although the titles of the 26 *ejidos* in the Comunidad Lacandona were finally issued in January 1989, the delay had taken its toll on the members. Furthermore, there were many other land petitions awaiting solutions.

Despite deteriorating economic and social conditions, *campesino* organisations demonstrated their capacity to respond to crises on several occasions, suggesting the cohesive strength of inter-community relations gradually built up over a period of 20 years. For example, in response to the evictions of four *ejidos* on 11 August 1985, 12 000 *campesinos* demonstrated in Ocosingo just two days later. Three days later 2500 protesters had marched to Tuxtla Gutiérrez. The ability of the ARIC to carry out its own census and put forward plans for regional development is also evidence of the level of social organisation in the area.⁷⁰

There are many other sources of *campesino* radicalism in Chiapas. Between 1976 and 1989 the Tzotzil community of Venustiano Carranza fought a bitter struggle to recuperate over 3000 hectares of prime land from local ranchers.

Although the community had been issued in 1965 with a presidential resolution in its favour, ranchers deployed their own gunmen to evict *campesinos* from the disputed land. Twenty-five members of the community were killed between 1965 and 1985, while many others were imprisoned. In 1980 the community joined the Coordinadora Nacional Plan de Ayala (CNPA), a network of *campesino* and indigenous groups whose main demands were for land and an end to repression. In 1982 it joined with other local organisations to form the Organización Campesina Emiliano Zapata (OCEZ). At the end of the 1980s the OCEZ split into two factions. The group in Venustiano Carranza had left the CNPA and begun to work with a rival organisation, the Frente Nacional Democrático Popular (FNDP). Both factions of the OCEZ displayed mistrust of all political parties and electoral struggles, distancing themselves from opposition left parties whom they regarded as reformist. The news of revolutionary movements in Central America was much more influential than in the case of the Unión de Uniones. The OCEZ leaders in Carranza also tended to prefer more visible public acts of protest than negotiations, bringing it into several violent confrontations with state police. As noted in the above discussion on agrarian struggles in the 1980s, the OCEZ and the CIOAC represented strong independent voices in the defence of *campesino* rights. During the early 1990s this type of radicalism was accompanied by the mobilisation of new groups around the assertion of ethnicity.

Until 1992 events in Chiapas had largely escaped national attention. However that began to change with a march of 400 Indians from Palenque to Mexico City in early 1992. The catalyst was another violent eviction by state police, this time of members of the Comité de Defensa de la Libertad Indígena (CDLI) who had gathered in Palenque on 28 December 1991. Their protest was to draw attention to the corruption of municipal presidents, the imposition of village authorities (*agentes municipales*), the failure of the government to carry out promised public works, the lack of solution to the *rezago agrario* and their opposition to the reforms to Article 27. Over 100 were arrested and several people were beaten and tortured. The government used a 1989 reform to the state Penal Code in breaking up the demonstration. Articles 129 to 135 of this code classified participation in unarmed mass protests as threats to public order which were liable to punishments of two to four years' imprisonment.

The 'Xi'Nich' march left Palenque on 7 March 1992 and arrived in the capital six weeks later.⁷¹ In the meantime it received national coverage in the independent press and solidarity from communities in Tabasco, Veracruz, Puebla and the state of Mexico. Its impact on national consciousness was to display the repressive nature of the state government in Chiapas. It also coincided with a growing awareness of the condition of indigenous peoples in the country.⁷² Nevertheless, although Xi'Nich was able to gain promises of solutions from federal agencies, by the end of 1992 several of the demands had not been met. The state's Penal Code was not reformed; no police officers were ever brought to trial for alleged human rights abuses; and municipal presidents continued to impose *agentes municipales*. There were still 30 arrest orders out against CDLI members and new public works had not begun.

It was in this context that a new organisation was formed in the Selva and

Altos regions. In late 1989 the Alianza Campesina Independiente Emiliano Zapata (ACIEZ) emerged in Altamirano, Ocosingo, San Cristóbal, Sabanilla and Salto de Agua. In early 1992 it changed its name to ANCIEZ by adding 'Nacional' to its title, claiming member organisations in six central and northern states. However, it was clearly strongest in Chiapas and had extended its base of support in just two years among Tzotzil, Tzeltal and Chol communities in the highland municipalities of El Bosque, Larrainzar, Chenalhó, Chanal, Huixtán, Oxchuc, Tila and Tumbalá. The lack of solution to the economic and agrarian demands in the Cañadas of Ocosingo contributed to the radicalisation of young campesinos by the ANCIEZ and their eventual support for the armed uprising. The size of this movement was revealed by the march in San Cristóbal on 12 October 1992 to commemorate 500 years of indigenous resistance. Roughly half the 10 000 Indians who participated were members of ANCIEZ. During the march the statue of Diego de Mazariegos, the Spanish conqueror and founder of Ciudad Real, was pulled down. Then in early 1993 ANCIEZ went underground, presumably to begin training for the armed rebellion. The clash with a federal army column in Ocosingo in May 1993 was the first clear sign of guerrilla activity, although the state government insisted that there were no guerrillas in Chiapas.

Conclusions

The rebellion in Chiapas is not reducible solely to local political conditions. It is a popular response to a series of rural reforms decided without the participation of representative *campesino* organisations. In short it is a rebellion against a new global strategy of accumulation and against *salinismo* as a political discourse. Historically, it is part of a cycle of rural rebellions which have periodically revealed the crisis of legitimation of the Mexican state. Furthermore, the Zapatistas set in motion two important processes of political struggle. On the one hand, the solidarity expressed by many pro-democracy movements provided the key to their convergence in the National Democratic Convention. On the other, within Chiapas thousands of *campesinos* began to recuperate land through direct action and force the issue of agrarian reform back onto the political agenda.

EZLN and the mobilisation of civil society

The impact of the Chiapas uprising was clearly felt at both the local and national levels. This was inevitable given the broad nature of the rebels' demands but defied the government's belief that the problems of Chiapas could be treated separately from national issues. This constituted the major political difference between the two sides when they met in late February in talks held at the Cathedral of San Cristóbal de las Casas. Although the government's Peace Commissioner, Manuel Camacho, offered solutions to concrete social demands, the larger question of national democratic reform was excluded from the agenda. When *subcomandante* Marcos recognised that there were issues which 'go beyond the negotiating table of San Cristóbal', he was not giving up the quest

for broader changes but demonstrating an awareness of the need to build a larger pro-democracy force in the country.

The important role played by a variety of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) during the talks helped to deepen the Zapatistas' appreciation of civil society as their most effective ally in the struggle for a peaceful solution. Civil society, then, would come to provide the bridge between the local and the national. As the rebels returned to the Selva to deliberate over the government's proposals, they sent out a clear message: 'Do not leave us alone'. This call took on a new urgency in the aftermath of the assassination of PRI's presidential candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio, on March 23 1994, which the Zapatistas interpreted as a sign that hard-liners within the government had taken the upper hand in reaction to the possibility of reforms favourable to the EZLN and the political opposition.

The mobilisation of support groups such as the University students' Caravana de Caravanas and the national coalition of NGOs, Espacio Civil para la Democracia (ESPAZ), demonstrated the clear links to be established between Chiapas and national political reform. This became even more apparent when, in mid-June, the EZLN rejected the government's proposals and instead decided to deepen the dialogue with civil society. At the time of the 'no' vote most commentators focused on the possible consequences for finding a peaceful solution in Chiapas and paid less attention to the Zapatistas' call for a National Democratic Convention (CND). Little by little, however, the idea of a citizens' assembly to unite the numerous opposition movements and groups began to catch on. An organising committee was set up and began to work intensively over the next six weeks to assure the success of the convention.

In Chiapas the State Assembly of the Chiapanecan People was born as a loose coalition of citizens' groups, *campesino* organisations, democratic union currents and NGOs. Over 60 groups were represented at its first state convention in early July 1994. The convention supported the EZLN's call for a transitional government, a new Constituent Assembly and a new federal constitution. The new coalition held a second convention two weeks later to prepare proposals of Chiapas delegates to the CND presented 6-9 August 1994 at an *ejido* in Zapatista territory symbolically named Aguascalientes after the revolutionary convention of the forces of Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa in 1914.

Democratic conventions were held in several other states during July and delegates were elected. On 6 August 1994 over 6000 delegates, invited intellectuals and observers descended on San Cristóbal de las Casas to begin deliberations in five mini-conventions on the need for a transitional government, the adoption of peaceful strategies to achieve democracy, an alternative national project, the organisation of a new Constituent Assembly and the elaboration of a new national constitution. With this number of people it was impossible to reach more than general agreements in support of the EZLN. The major point of debate concerned the role of electoral participation in bringing about change in Mexico. Some groups on the extreme left argued that only mass mobilisation (possibly including armed insurgency), and not the elections, could dislodge the PRI from power. However, the debate was constrained by the sheer number of delegates and the desire of the convention organisers to approve a common

platform. As the EZLN had itself encouraged participation in the elections and in defense of the vote, the extreme left groups were at a clear disadvantage. However, in the light of the reports of electoral fraud in Chiapas in the August 1994 elections, the issue will remain a point of controversy and the abstentionist position may have been strengthened.

The ensuing journey from San Cristóbal to Aguascalientes in the Selva Lacandona and the reaffirmation of unity behind the Zapatistas' demands served to demonstrate to the government and other sectors of society that the EZLN was indeed not alone, but that there now existed a political force capable of carrying the banners of democracy and justice. The EZLN displayed a great deal of political maturity by declaring that it would 'step to one side' while it gave the newly constituted CND the opportunity to apply peaceful pressure for political change. In a major speech, *subcomandante* Marcos allayed fears of an imminent armed uprising following the national elections and instead called on the peaceful civic and popular movement 'to defeat us', to make armed action unnecessary.⁷¹

The victory for the PRI candidate Ernesto Zedillo in the presidential race poses new problems for achieving peace and justice in Chiapas. While many observers declared that the election day was relatively free from fraud, it was also clear that the PRI campaign benefited disproportionately from the use of public funds and media time. Hundreds of irregularities were also reported on election day, particularly the lack of sufficient ballot papers at special voting booths, the 'shaving' of voters' names from voting lists and the violation of secrecy. However, most analysts agreed that the final outcome was not significantly affected by these cases. This means that Zedillo appears to command a stronger position than that enjoyed by Salinas in 1988.

Nevertheless, there are several unknown factors which will condition the new government's response to the CND and EZLN. These include the political abilities of Zedillo himself, his relationship to the reformist and hard-line sectors of the PRI, and the perception of the need for further democratic reform. Clearly there are several areas where the PRI still maintains an unfair advantage in electoral competition and, if Zedillo were to conclude that electoral reform had gone as far as it should, then he would be risking a backlash from the opposition, particularly the PRD. It should be remembered that if meaningful political participation of the opposition continues to be frustrated, then the armed option may recruit more supporters, especially among the economically disenfranchised youth. This is even more evident in the case of Chiapas. The governorship race on August 21 was won by the PRI candidate, Eduardo Robledo Rincón in the midst of widespread protests of fraud and violent clashes in Tuxtla Gutiérrez. The official result gave Robledo 50.4% of the vote, compared to 34.9% for Amado Avendaño Figueroa, candidate of the Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD), and 9.2% for Cesáreo Hernández of the Partido de Acción Nacional (PAN). The PRD claimed that Avendaño had in fact won and called for civic protests to prevent Robledo from taking office in December 1994. PRD supporters could point to several disturbing incidents during the election campaign, including the head-on crash of an unlicensed trailer into Avendaño's car just three weeks before election day. Although the candidate escaped with his

life, three members of his campaign team were killed in what the PRD believed to be a premeditated attack. The police investigation concluded that the crash was an accident and arrested the suspected driver. Following the elections another PRD leader was killed in the town of Jaltenango, near the Guatemalan border.

PRD and PAN representatives also accused the electoral authorities of altering the voting results during the transit of the ballot papers and the documented results from the individual polling stations to the offices of the State Electoral Commission.⁷⁴ The EZLN issued a strong statement condemning the fraud and called on Robledo not to assume office in order to avoid a potential 'blood-bath'.

These incidents and the general bias of the electoral process in Chiapas do not bode well for achieving a peaceful solution to the armed rebellion. They also occurred in a context of increasing belligerence on the part of *campesino* organisations which began to take the law into their own hands during the first half of 1994. Yet they may also overshadow the agrarian issue and the sectoral demands discussed below. A renewal of violence in late 1994 could quickly drag many of the relevant actors under the feet of bloody civil war. It is in the hope that this does not occur that the following considerations on the agrarian question are made. These reflections should reveal the need for political dialogue in reducing the current political polarisation in the state.

The resurgence of the campesino movement in Chiapas

One of the general problems which the rebellion revealed is the apparent incapacity of the government to implement the *ejido* reform. This is particularly evident in the area controlled by the EZLN but is also the case in other areas of Chiapas where *campesino* organisations took advantage of the political conjuncture to occupy privately owned lands for which they had been petitioning without success for several years. The revival of these organisations has been remarkable if we consider the level of disarticulation which prevailed before the Zapatista rebellion. It has also questioned the viability of legal changes which lack consensus and, for the case of Chiapas, raises doubts concerning the government's proposed Ley de Justicia Agraria.

The precise impact of *ejido* reform in Chiapas has been discussed from many angles. For some the land conflicts in the state are so deep-rooted and complex that it would be unfair to attribute the blame to a new law which has not yet had time to be implemented. They would add that one of the central aims of the new legal framework is precisely to provide solutions to the backlog of land petitions and to clarify internal disputes and conflicts over boundaries between *ejidos* and neighbouring properties. According to the logic of this argument, with time, institutional efficiency and a measure of good will from all sides, these conflicts can be solved and the land tenure situation will become transparent and accepted as just.

There may be some truth to this in some parts of the country. Even in Chiapas several *ejidos* have turned to PROCEDE in order to clarify once and for all the rights of each individual *ejidatario*. According to data provided by the state delegate of RAN, by the end of June 1994 in Chiapas, 78 of 2072 *ejidos* and

comunidades agrarias had completed the certification process. PROCEDE personnel had issued 9601 individual land titles, 7258 titles for individual dwelling areas (*solares urbanos*) and 1656 certificates for use of common lands.

However, almost all these *ejidos* are located in the least conflictive areas which are also the most integrated into the dominant culture and economy (Costa and Centro). For obvious reasons PROCEDE has not advanced in the Selva Lacandona, nor in Los Altos, where there is strong resistance thanks to a high degree of suspicion regarding the government's true objectives. In addition, we can say that the *ejido* reform has not had the desired effect in terms of promoting private investment. In Chiapas only one *sociedad mercantil* has been formed, and this is made up completely of private owners in the relatively developed Frailesca area. Similarly, there have been no joint ventures (*asociaciones en participación*) registered between *ejidatarios* and investors. It should also be noted that none of those *ejidos* which have completed the certification process have taken the decision to sell *ejido* land. In each case the overriding concern was with regularisation of individual holdings within the *ejido*.

If the stated goals of the *ejido* reform are not yet in evidence, the negative impact of declaring an end to land distribution is still being felt. We noted earlier how this helped detonate the Zapatista rebellion and how it was received amid the political confrontations generated by unresolved land disputes. During 1994 the pressure for land distribution in Chiapas continued to defy the new legislation and, because of its centrality to the political crisis in the state (and, by extension, the country), revealed the need for solutions which are not contemplated in the current legal and institutional framework. The clearest illustration of this lack of acceptance of neoliberal legality is the 'illegal' occupation of over 50 000 hectares of private property in almost every area of the state.

The impact of ejido reform in Chiapas: land seizures and campesino rebellion

The EZLN uprising made people aware of the unequal distribution of land in Chiapas and the size of the state's backlog of unresolved land petitions. At the time that the reforms to Article 27 came into effect this *rezago agrario* included 3483 land petitions and 164 presidential resolutions. This represented 27% of the total backlog in the entire country. However, according to official figures, by the end of June 1994, 94% of the *rezago* in Chiapas had been resolved.⁷⁵ Some 46% of the petitions were approved, compared to 54% which were rejected on the grounds of the unavailability of private land for redistribution or other impediments.

By July 1994 then, there were 989 cases still pending. These included 125 land petitions, 12 presidential resolutions, 435 petitions which had been sent to the Supreme Agrarian Tribunal for a final decision and 417 technical matters such as the drawing up of maps and documentation.⁷⁶ Although these figures paint a relatively successful picture, many *campesinos* complain that in fact the backlog has only been solved on paper and not in practice. Furthermore, during the first five months of 1994, those groups whose land petitions had been rejected presented 249 new claims. The difference now was that they were made in a very different context to that which prevailed in 1992 and 1993.

As mentioned above, one of the effects of the EZLN uprising was the resurgence of independent *campesino* movements across the state. The formation of CEOIC in late January 1994 marked the starting point of a period of *campesino* mobilisation involving at least 8000 land claimants belonging to 11 organisations. During the first six months of the year some 340 private farms representing over 50 000 hectares were seized. In several cases the occupations led to violent confrontations and a CEOIC leader, Mariano López, was assassinated in March in Simojovel.

Given the already tense political situation created by the Zapatista rebellion, the state government called on the leaders of CEOIC and the landowners' associations to find negotiated solutions. On 14 April 1994 the governor signed an agreement with both sides, promising to investigate case by case the claims of each group, while offering not to order the eviction of those farms taken before that date. For their part, the CEOIC leaders agreed not to promote further land invasions. The government also offered landowners a monthly compensation of 45 new pesos (\$13) per hectare of land which they claimed as invaded. This measure obviously benefited larger landowners. For example, a holding of 300 hectares would be compensated for the sum of \$3900 per month as long as the invasions persisted.

The 14 April agreement did not hold. Ranchers accused CEOIC of continuing to carry out land invasions and in early July signed a new agreement with the state governor which threatened the imminent eviction of all the land seizures in the state. The fact that the government only proceeded to evict four farms was not only a source of irritation for the ranchers' associations, but more importantly an indication of the impossibility of removing thousands of *campesino* families by force in a political context which called for extreme caution. At the same time, the CEOIC leaders claimed that the state government and the ranchers were responsible for breaking the 14 April accord, citing the eviction of several farms in the municipality of Teopisca in May, the arrest and imprisonment of Enrique Pérez López, a *campesino* leader and human rights activist in Comitán, and the failure of the government to provide solutions to the claims presented since 1 January 1994.⁷⁷

The main obstacle to achieving a solution is the reluctance of landowners to sell. By the end of July there were only 89 owners who had declared their willingness to sell their properties. This would benefit 2350 *campesinos* with 11 910 hectares.⁷⁸ However, only 11 of these cases had been settled. In addition, there were 249 other farms (occupied by some 6000 *campesinos*) where the owners were unwilling to sell. In these cases the government offered to find other areas which could be settled by the land claimants, but if relocation was rejected then they would simply be evicted. This appears to repeat the same policies which contributed to the eventual unrest in the Selva Lacandona.

The CEOIC argued, in contrast, that if the private owners were unwilling to sell then the government should use its legal right to expropriate the land for the purpose of redistribution. The modifications to Article 27 did not delete the right of the nation to expropriate land 'for the purpose of public benefit'. This measure is often used to allow PEMEX to drill for oil or the Federal Electricity Company to construct a hydroelectricity dam. According to CEOIC, the *campesinos*, who in

fact had often lost their rights to *ejido* land as a result of expropriation for these types of projects, should now benefit from the expropriation of holdings which they had been petitioning through the legal channels for many years.⁷⁶

The negative response of the state government to the request for expropriation was predictable. In negotiations with CIOIC representatives in June, it claimed that the argument for expropriation was unfounded since 'the decision to respect private property and the will of private owners is not open to negotiation'. Illustrating a central ambiguity in agrarian legislation, the government added that 'the constitutional order does not allow for exceptions'. It concluded that expropriation is not the only way to solve land disputes and promised to search for alternative means. By completely rejecting this option the government revealed not only a lack of political will to affect the interests of the landowners, but also a naive belief in the efficacy of other solutions such as the relocation of petitioning groups or support for productive projects in existing *ejidos*. The size of the problem is given by simply comparing the area which has been occupied (50 000 hectares) with the area which has been offered for sale (11 910 hectares). According to one CIOIC leader, the government set a ceiling of 20 000 hectares to solve the demand for land in Chiapas and its real objective was to begin evicting *campesinos* from occupied farms after the 21 August elections.

It should be noted, however, that not all members of CIOIC adopted the same position. A clear division has existed from its inception between the independent radical organisations which call for expropriation and other moderate or PRI-affiliated groups which have adopted different strategies. Among the latter, the three largest organisations are Solidaridad Campesina Magisterial (SOCAMA), the CNC and the ARIC Unión de Uniones. Each of these criticised the CIOIC, OCTZ/CNPA, XI'Nich and other radical groups for attempting to claim leadership of CIOIC and pursuing confrontational strategies which lacked consensus.

This division became particularly apparent after 14 April during negotiations to resolve each organisation's land claims. For example, SOCAMA elaborated an independent proposal which gained the government's approval in July. Under this plan, the federal and state governments would provide SOCAMA with 20 million new pesos for the purpose of obtaining a credit fund with 50 million pesos from the regional office of Banrural. This fund would be used to purchase the land which SOCAMA members were claiming and the credit would be paid back with the subsidies received from PROCAMPO over a period to be established by each individual *campesino*. Part of the interest on the credit would be covered by the interest generated by the initial 20 million peso guarantee and SOCAMA would request additional support from SEDESOL to make up the difference. Once the credit is paid back and the land fully paid for, the 20 million pesos would be used to support productive projects among the members. In the meantime SEDESOL agreed to provide infrastructure and interest-free credit. These measures were seen as necessary to include those *campesinos* whose land claims had been turned down. One of SOCAMA's principal leaders, Manuel Hernández Gómez, explained that this approach was more likely to succeed than simply polarising the issue between expropriation or maintaining the status quo.⁸⁰ The positive response which the proposal received from the state government was seen by the radical wing of CIOIC as evidence of favouritism and an abdication of the

commitment to the struggle for land in the future. SOCAMA had negotiated independently of CEOIC and, in keeping with the reformed Article 27, agreed not to press for further land distribution once current claims had been settled. In addition, the use of the PROCAMPO subsidies to purchase land was criticised as a diversion from their intended use, namely to support basic grain production.

In the case of the CNC the strategy was less innovative and more opportunistic. While CNC groups invaded land as much as CIOAC or OCEZ-CNPA, it also accused the radical groups of politicising CEOIC and supporting the opposition PRD candidacy for the governorship. Of the 89 properties to be purchased for redistribution, the CNC was to receive 17, compared to 46 for the CIOAC. However, the actual land area involved is not so different: 2902 hectares for CNC and 3565 hectares for CIOAC.⁸⁹ The CNC has therefore been able to use the strength represented by CEOIC but has participated less in its political struggles with the state government and has tended to avoid confrontations over policy reform.

Finally, ARIC-Unión de Uniones became an important part of the government's attempt to limit the radicalising effects of the EZLN in Chiapas. Large amounts of new resources for productive projects and infrastructure have been provided since the uprising. The effectiveness of this strategy has not been entirely successful for either the government or ARIC. It appears that *campesino* support for EZLN has not declined as a result of new government programmes, while the increasing moderation of the ARIC leadership led to a split in July 1994 as several member organisations established a parallel leadership more clearly identified with the EZLN and the goals of the CND. One of the reasons for the split was the decision of the ARIC president to accept the PRI candidacy for federal deputy in the electoral district of Ocosingo. His supporters recognised that the members should have been consulted more fully, but it is doubtful that the candidacy would have been approved.

The divisions within CEOIC may increase in the aftermath of the August 1994 elections as the new government provides financial and political incentives to isolate radical groups by rewarding more moderate or compliant organisations. We can expect the PRI to use traditional divide-and-rule tactics in its broader effort to weaken support for the EZLN and in the continuing struggle to impose the new agrarian legislation. It will attempt to gather support for a new state-level agrarian law which is clearly biased against further land redistribution. The 'Law of Agrarian Justice and Promotion of Rural Development in Chiapas', which by September 1994 was awaiting approval by the state legislature, was designed as the official response to one of the Zapatistas' demands regarding the need for land reform in Chiapas. However, the draft text does not add anything substantially different from what is already contained in the federal Agrarian Law of 1992. Although, if passed, the state law would allow *campesino* organisations to denounce the existence of *latifundio* holdings and would oblige the government to investigate such cases, in reality it is highly unlikely that any *latifundios* would be detected because of the practice of sub-dividing estates among family members and name-lenders. At the same time, as with the federal legislation, landowners who are found to be in possession of properties exceeding the legal limits would be given the right to sell off the indicated properties

within the space of one year. There is no mention of the legal right of the state to expropriate such extensions for the purpose of land distribution. Instead the focus of the government's proposal is on modernising production and increasing efficiency.

Serious problems may therefore arise if the state-level legislation is passed. Although more moderate groups might support the new measures, there is a clear lack of consensus among a significant part of the affected population. The fact that it was drawn up hastily without proper consultation is also a source of tension. In this regard the radical wing of CROIC proposed the re-opening of consultations with all *campesino* organisations in the state and that the new law be elaborated on the basis of the proposals put forward in grassroots assemblies.

A different problem facing CROIC is the less than complete support it enjoys among national *campesino* organisations which are struggling to find ways to insert themselves into the new political economy of free trade. Only a minority of these would make the issue of land tenure the articulating principle for any national mobilisation for policy reform. It appears unlikely that the right to petition for land will ever be reintroduced into Article 27, particularly following the PRI's victory on 21 August. One of the central tasks for the broad array of *campesino* movements, then, is the formulation of new proposals to deal with the social, environmental, political and economic problems generated by NAFTA and globalisation. In short, there needs to be a vision for the future not a nostalgia for the past if anything is to change. The goal of the CND is precisely to articulate such a vision along peaceful and constructive lines.

It is here that *campesino* organisations have a positive role to play in finding solutions to the current crisis. Increasing the belligerent tone of their actions will only harden the elite opposition to reform in Chiapas and the situation could easily degenerate into armed conflict with Central American-style death-squad killings. But the first steps have to be taken by the government, Eduardo Robledo and Ernesto Zedillo. The opposition has to be shown convincing evidence of the authorities' willingness to recognise electoral fraud in Chiapas and correct the irregularities. There has to be a willingness to open up the political system and provide meaningful channels for political participation. If this does not happen many of the people who voted for Amado Avendaño (almost 350 000 according to official figures and probably many more) will rightly conclude that they have no stake in the political system and make their choices accordingly. Let us hope that the lessons of 1 January 1994 have been learned and that politics triumphs over war.

Notes

¹ This is a shorter version of an article published in *Transformation of Rural Mexico* No 5, La Jolla, CA: Center for US-Mexican Studies, University of California, 1994.

² The social sector in rural Mexico refers to lands which were redistributed under the agrarian reform programme mandated by Article 27 after the 1910-17 Revolution. This sector is comprised of *ejidos* and *comunidades agrarias*, comprised of *ejidatarios* and *comuneros*, respectively. The former refer to lands which the state redistributed through the break-up of private holdings or through the colonisation of unused

- 'national lands'. The latter refer to lands historically held by indigenous communities, as well as to communities established through petitions to recuperate areas lost to encroachment by private owners.
- ¹ A Warman, 'Chiapas hoy', *La Jornada*, 16 January 1994, pp 1-15.
- ² L. Hernández, 'El café y la guerra', *La Jornada*, 30 January 1994, pp 1, 48.
- ³ *La Jornada*, 6 February 1994.
- ⁴ Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI), *Atlas ejidal del Estado de Chiapas. Encuesta nacional agropecuaria ejidal*, 1988, Aguascalientes: INEGI, 1991.
- ⁵ Secretaría de Agricultura y Recursos Hidráulicos and Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (SARH (CPAI)), *Primer informe nacional sobre tipología de productores del sector social*, Mexico City: Subsecretaría de Política Sectorial y Concertación/SARH, mimeo. (Forthcoming as 'Productores del sector social rural en México', *Transformation of Rural Mexico, No 1*, La Jolla, CA: Center for US-Mexican Studies, University of California.)
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p 19.
- ⁷ Equipo Pueblo/Instituto Maya 'Desde Chihuahua hasta Chiapas...' Mexico City: Equipo Pueblo, 1988, p 49.
- ⁸ G Thompson, R M del Carmen García Aguilar & M Castillo Huerta, *Crecimiento y desarrollo económico en Chiapas, 1982-1988*, Tuxtla Gutiérrez: Universidad Autónoma de Chiapas, 1988.
- ⁹ The mill was sold for about US\$14 million (42 000 million old pesos) to the Empresa Operadora Gijalva, a company that processes coffee and sugar. The Pupitile sale caused discontent among cane growers who had been arguing for the transfer of the mill to their ownership.
- ¹⁰ L. Hernández, 'Nadando con los tiburones: la experiencia de la Coordinadora Nacional de Organizaciones Cafetaleras', *Cuadernos Agrarios 1* (Nueva Época) 1991, pp 52-75.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p 52.
- ¹² Hernández, 'El café y la guerra'.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁴ *La Jornada*, 23 January 1994, p 47.
- ¹⁵ R Robles, 'El campo y el pacto', *El Cotidiano*, 23 1988, pp 65-72.
- ¹⁶ C Hewitt de Alcántara *Economic Restructuring and Rural Subsistence in Mexico: Maize and the Crisis of the 1980s*, Discussion Paper 31, Geneva: UNRISD, 1992, pp 10-12.
- ¹⁷ The PCTC was originally named the Pacto de Solidaridad Económica.
- ¹⁸ Hewitt de Alcántara, *Economic Restructuring and Rural Subsistence in Mexico*, p 13.
- ¹⁹ Thompson *et al.*, *Crecimiento y desarrollo económico en Chiapas*, pp 225-230.
- ²⁰ R Robles & J Moguel, 'Agricultura y proyecto neoliberal', *El Cotidiano* 34 1990, pp 3-12.
- ²¹ One piece of anecdotal evidence is the remark made by a *campesino* leader following a meeting with Banrural officials in Durango in Autumn 1991. 'It's funny', he said, 'before we didn't know each other but there was always some money. Now we can talk face to face, but there is nothing!'. The *campesinos* were requesting a loan to finance marketing of maize and beans. Banrural was in the process of pulling out of Durango.
- ²² J Calva, *Probables efectos de un Tratado de Libre Comercio en el campo*, Mexico City: Fontamara, 1992.
- ²³ Secretaría de Agricultura y Recursos Hidráulicos (SARH), 'PROCAMPO: a new support program for the Mexican farm sector', mimeo, Mexico City: SARH, 1993.
- ²⁴ These were maize, beans, sorghum, soy beans, rice, wheat and cotton.
- ²⁵ SARH (CPAI), *Primer informe nacional sobre tipología de productores del sector social*, p 92.
- ²⁶ A Cano, 'Lo más delgado del hilo: Pronasol en Chiapas', *Reforma*, 23 January 1994, pp 3-7. The *CSOX* emerged as an independent response to the collapse in the international price in 1989, although it has antecedents in the early 1980s (J Moguel, 'La lucha por la apropiación de la vida social en la economía cafetalera: la experiencia de la *CSOX* 1990-91', in J Moguel, C Botey & L. Hernández (eds), *Autonomía y Nuevos Sujetos Sociales en el Desarrollo Rural*, Mexico City, Siglo XXI Editores and Centro de Estudios Históricos del Agrarismo en México, 1992, pp 98-118.) By the end of 1993 it represented almost 60 000 small producers from seven states, including some 20 000 growers from Chiapas. Most of its member organisations were independent of the PRI and other political parties. According to its own census compiled in December 1993, in Chiapas there were 40 local organisations participating in *CSOX*.
- ²⁷ J Moguel, 'Chiapas y el Pronasol', *La Jornada del Campo*, supplement of *La Jornada*, 25 January 1994, pp 7-8.
- ²⁸ Information contained in this section is drawn from Cano, 'Lo más delgado del hilo'. In Chiapas the programme was renamed 'Credito a la Solidaridad' by Gonzalez Garrido.
- ²⁹ *La Jornada*, 21 March 1991, p 13.
- ³⁰ The announcement in August 1993 of a further \$55 million for social projects in the border region of Chiapas obviously came too late to forestall the rebellion. Solidaridad moneys were also allegedly used for such non priority works as the construction of hundreds of basketball courts, a sumptuous convention centre in Tuxtla Gutiérrez and the refurbishment of central parks and town halls. See S Hughes, 'You can't eat basketball courts', *El Financiero Internacional*, 24-30 January 1994, p 15.

- ¹ Programa de Certificación de Derechos Ejidales y Titulación de Solares Urbanos (PROCEDE), *Documento una*, Mexico City: Procuraduría Agraria, 1993, p. 10.
- ² F. Benjamin, *A Rich Land, a Poor People: Politics and Society in Modern Chiapas*, Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1989, pp. 95–143.
- ³ Article 1 of the Ley Agraria del Estado de Chiapas of 1921 stipulated that 'The term latifundio refers to all properties which exceed 8000 hectares, held by an individual person or by a company [sociedad] that has the legal capacity to acquire ownership' (emphasis added). It is ironic that in 1994 a group of 25 individuals associated in a *sociedad mercantil* can own up to 10 000 hectares of good quality pasture land without being considered *latifundistas*, at least by the law.
- ⁴ A. García de León, *Resistencia y utopía*, 2 vols, Mexico City: Era, 1985.
- ⁵ I. Reyes Ramos, *El reparto de tierras y la política agraria en Chiapas, 1914–1988*, Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and Centro de Investigaciones Humanísticas de Mesoamérica y del Estado de Chiapas, 1992, p. 62.
- ⁶ J. M. Fernández Ortiz & M. Tarrío García, *Ganadería y estructura agraria en Chiapas*, Mexico City: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Unidad Xochimilco, 1983, pp. 140–151; Benjamin, *A Rich Land, a Poor People*, pp. 223–233; and N. Harvey, 'Peasant strategies and corporatism in Chiapas', in J. Foweraker & A. Craig (eds), *Popular Movements and Political Change in Mexico*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1990.
- ⁷ E. L. Pontigo Sánchez, 'Dinámica social y movimientos campesinos en Simojovel y Huitupán, Chiapas', unpublished thesis in economics, Area of Social Sciences, Autonomous University of Chiapas, 1985.
- ⁸ Reyes Ramos, *El reparto de tierras y la política agraria en Chiapas*, pp. 113–118.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 119.
- ¹⁰ Secretaría de la Reforma Agraria (SRA), 'Acciones agrarias', Subdelegación de concertación agraria en zonas indígenas, mimeo, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas, 1989.
- ¹¹ Horizontes, *Boletín del Centro de Derechos Humanos 'Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas'*, 2, November 1990, San Cristóbal de Las Casas; Horizontes, *Boletín del Centro de Derechos Humanos 'Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas'*, 3, March 1991, San Cristóbal de Las Casas; and Horizontes, *Boletín del Centro de Derechos Humanos 'Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas'*, 4–5, September 1991, San Cristóbal de Las Casas.
- ¹² N. Harvey, 'Conservación a costa de la miseria', *Campo Uno*, supplement of *Uno Más Uno*, 1 and 8 June 1993.
- ¹³ A. Aguilar Zinser, 'Jodo en Chiapas es Centroamérica', *El Financiero*, 21 October 1991, p. 56.
- ¹⁴ De pite a 1989 ban on exploitation of forestry resources in Chiapas, this activity has continued because of the lack of adequate alternative sources of income. Moreover, the ban has led to several conflicts with the police and army. The July 1991 protests in the Selva, referred to above, originated in application of the 1989 decree.
- ¹⁵ Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, *Civilians at Risk: Military and Police Abuses in the Mexican Countryside*, North America Project Special Report 6, New York: World Policy Institute, 1993, pp. 10–16.
- ¹⁶ J. Moguel, 'Reforma constitucional y luchas agrarias en el marco de la transición salinista', in J. Moguel *et al.*, p. 273.
- ¹⁷ *El Financiero*, 30 June 1993, p. 36.
- ¹⁸ *La Jornada*, 1 February 1994, p. 5.
- ¹⁹ Moguel, 'Reforma constitucional y luchas agrarias en el marco de la transición', p. 271.
- ²⁰ Lullier de San Cristóbal, 'Reformas al artículo 27 constitucional', unpublished workshop proceedings, San Cristóbal de las Casas, 1992.
- ²¹ Interview, Registrars Agrarios Nacional, Mexico City, January 1994.
- ²² X. Leyva Solano & G. Ascencio Franco, 'Apuntes para el estudio de la ganaderización en la Selva Lacandona', in *Anuario de Cultura e Investigación 1992*, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas: Instituto Chiapaneco de Cultura, 1993, p. 274.
- ²³ Interview, January 1993.
- ²⁴ E. I. Ramos Hernández, 'La colonización campesina en la selva lacandona (análisis y perspectivas)', unpublished thesis, Mexico City: Instituto Politécnico Nacional, 1978, p. 26.
- ²⁵ G. Ascencio Franco & X. Leyva Solano, 'Los municipios de la Selva Chiapaneca. Colonización y dinámica agropecuaria', in *Anuario de cultura e investigación 1991*, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas: Instituto Chiapaneco de Cultura, 1992, pp. 192–194.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 217.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 192–194.
- ²⁸ Leyva Solano & Ascencio Franco, 'Apuntes para el estudio de la ganaderización en la Selva Lacandona', p. 273.
- ²⁹ Ascencio Franco & Leyva Solano, 'Los municipios de la Selva Chiapaneca', p. 204.
- ³⁰ S. Dichil, *Cae una estrella: Desarrollo y destrucción de la Selva Lacandona*, Mexico City: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1987, p. 45.
- ³¹ Ascencio Franco & Leyva Solano, 'Los municipios de la Selva Chiapaneca', p. 211.
- ³² F. Mesiries, 'Testimonios del Congreso Indígena de San Cristóbal de Las Casas. Octubre de 1974', in J.

- Moguel (ed), *Historia de la Cuestión Agraria Mexicana*, vol 9, part 2, Mexico City: Siglo XXI Editores and Centro de Estudios Históricos del Agrarismo en México, 1990, p 473.
- ⁶⁵ Ibid; and J Morales Bermúdez, 'El Congreso Indígena de Chiapas: un testimonio', in *Anuario de cultura e investigación 1991*, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas: Instituto Chiapaneco de Cultura, 1992, pp 242-370.
- ⁶⁶ R Wasserstrom, *Class and Society in Central Chiapas*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1983, p 178; and J Rus, 'The "Comunidad Revolucionaria Institucional": the subversion of native government in highland Chiapas, 1936-1968', in G Joseph & D Nugent (eds), *Everyday Forms of State Formation: Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, forthcoming.
- ⁶⁷ Uniones de Ejidos are second-level organisations which unite two or more ejidos as productive units. During the Echeverría presidency (1970-76), the government promoted the formation of UEs as a way to increase productivity in the social sector. Under new legislation preferential credit was to be channelled to those ejidos which joined together in second-level organisations. On the limitations of this strategy, see J Moguel & P López Sierra, 'Política agraria y modernización capitalista', in J Moguel (ed).
- ⁶⁸ Interview with adviser to U.E. Quipuc, October 1987.
- ⁶⁹ N Harvey, 'La Unión de Uniones de Chiapas y los retos políticos del desarrollo de base', in Moguel *et al.* These were Ocosingo, Las Margaritas, Tila, Sabánilla, Huitupán, El Bosque, Larrainzar, Yajalón, Comitán, Frontera Comalapa and Motozintla.
- ⁷⁰ Ascencio Franco & Leyva Solano, 'Los municipios de la Selva Chiapaneco', pp 239-241.
- ⁷¹ 'Xi'nich' is the Chol word for ants. One of the leaders of the march explained how the government had tried to stamp out the Palenque demonstration but had only succeeded in disturbing an ant's nest.
- ⁷² A Cepeda Neri, 'Chiapas: la lucha por los derechos humanos', *La Jornada*, 21 April 1992, p 5; F Reyes Heróles, 'Esa vergüenza nacional', *La Jornada*, 22 April 1992, p 19; and H Bellinghausen, 'Xi'nich y la cultura de la victoria', *La Jornada*, 27 April 1992, p 26.
- ⁷³ *La Jornada*, 10 August 1994.
- ⁷⁴ *Proceso*, 29 August 1994, p 18.
- ⁷⁵ *La Jornada*, 14 July 1994, p 16.
- ⁷⁶ SRA 'Programa de abatimiento del rezago agrario, Estado de Chiapas', Tuxtla Gutiérrez: Subsecretaría de Asuntos Agrarios, 1994.
- ⁷⁷ Interviews with three leaders of CECIC, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, July 1994.
- ⁷⁸ SRA, 'Programa de abatimiento del rezago agrario'.
- ⁷⁹ Interviews with CECIC leaders, Ocosingo, July 1994.
- ⁸⁰ Interview, Mexico City, July 1994.
- ⁸¹ SRA, 'Programa de abatimiento del rezago agrario'.

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1996 - Volume 1 (3 issues). ISSN 1356-9317.

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Free market reform and drug market prohibition: US policies at cross-purposes in Latin America

PETER ANDREAS

Much of US policy towards Latin America in the last decade has been driven by two agendas: promoting the spread of neoliberal market reforms and combating the spread of the illegal drugs trade.¹ Indeed, with the thawing of the Cold War by the end of the 1980s, making peace with the market and declaring war on drugs became defining features of US relations with most of the region. Liberalisation of markets, accompanied by strict austerity measures, has been pushed by the United States as the remedy for stagnant, debt-burdened Latin economies.² At the same time, countries have been pushed to adopt strict law enforcement measures to combat the illegal drugs trade.³ US assistance—in the form of foreign aid, support for loans through multilateral funding agencies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), trade concessions, and diplomatic favour—are linked to these twin policy objectives.

Although the first policy objective is viewed as an economic issue and the second policy objective is viewed as a law enforcement issue, both involve reshaping the relationship between states and markets. Neoliberal policies call for a more minimalist state, while prohibitionist policies call for a more interventionist state. Thus, the USA has promoted a *curtailment* of state intervention in the market (through liberalisation) even as it has promoted an *escalation* of state intervention (through prohibition). Latin American countries have been under significant pressure to comply with both liberalisation and prohibition objectives, the first primarily through the financial leverage of US-supported multilateral funding agencies (especially the IMF) and the second primarily through direct US diplomatic and economic leverage.

However, the compatibility of these two very different models of state-market relations is questionable, since legal and illegal markets are often inextricably intertwined.⁴ In many countries, the drug export sector is not isolated from, but integrated into, the national economy. Not only are they closely linked, but the informal drug economy is guided by many of the same market principles which regulate the formal economy. Thus, even as the USA seeks to expand the role of market forces and the private sector, the awkward reality in many Latin American countries is that the drug export industry is a leading market force and an integral component of the private sector.

Indeed, as we shall see, the revenues and jobs generated by the illegal drug industry have actually helped some states adopt the very market reforms and austerity measures encouraged by the USA and the IMF, and these neoliberal programmes, in turn, have in some ways actually helped fuel the illegal drug

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industry. Thus, neoliberalism both *stimulates* and is *stimulated* by the very illegal market which the USA is attempting to prohibit. Neoliberalism reduces the role of the state in regulating the national economy, and this has an impact on the drug export sector in those countries where it is integrated into the economy. Similarly, neoliberalism reduces the ability of the state to withstand external market pressures—and the enormous global market demand for drugs is certainly no exception. The logic of neoliberalism is for the state to conform to the dictates of international market pressures (with little regard to state-created distinctions between legal and illegal markets). Robert Cox has called this the 'internationalization of the state': the process whereby national policies are adjusted to the exigencies of the international economy.⁵ Although illegal, the global drug economy can be seen as part of this broader process.

The United States, however, wants it both ways: a strong interventionist state in one sphere of the economy (the illegal drug market), and a weak, minimalist state in all other spheres of the economy. In fact, far from seeing this as a problematic combination, US officials view market liberalisation as a facilitator of drug market prohibition. As the 1994 National Drug Control Strategy report noted, the growth of 'free market economies presents new international narcotics control opportunities ...' According to the report, 'market-oriented governments are much easier to work with and more willing to cooperate with the international community in a common effort against the illicit drug industry'.⁶

The experience in two of Latin America's major drug producing countries—Peru and Bolivia—suggests otherwise. To the delight of US officials, the two countries have implemented the most sweeping neoliberal market reforms and orthodox austerity measures ever attempted in Latin America. To the dismay of US officials, however, they are also two of the largest drug producers in the world and have only half-heartedly cooperated with the US anti-drug campaign.⁷

In the Peruvian and Bolivian economic context, compliance with neoliberal policy objectives has necessarily meant undermining US drug policy objectives. As we shall see, drug production in Peru and Bolivia both *facilitates* and is *fuelled* by neoliberal reforms and orthodox austerity measures. Thus, US and IMF sponsorship of these economic policies conflicts with the US-sponsored effort to curb drug production.⁸ Of course, this is in no way meant to suggest that the drug control campaign would be a success in the absence of neoliberal economic policies, or that neoliberal policies are somehow the cause of the drug trade. After all, the drug export sector and unsuccessful drug policies existed long before neoliberal economic strategies were adopted. At best, the economic issues considered here are only part of the explanation for why drug control efforts in Peru and Bolivia have repeatedly failed.⁹

Peru and Bolivia produce virtually all the world's supply of coca, the raw material of cocaine. Coca is the most dynamic sector of their economies, serving as the leading generator of foreign exchange and a crucial source of employment. The further opening of their economies through market liberalisation has only increased the incentive to specialise in coca, the export commodity which provides them with the greatest returns in the global economy.

Suffering from balance of payments problems and a decline in revenues from traditional exports, Peru and Bolivia have had an incentive to tolerate the influx

of dollars from the coca export sector into the banking system to help carry out difficult economic reforms and finance heavy foreign debts. The coca export sector also plays the crucial role of absorbing many of those left unemployed as a result of the adoption of harsh IMF-style austerity measures.

In this context, Peru and Bolivia cannot afford to fully comply with US drug control objectives—to do so would damage the same neoliberal programme which the USA and the IMF have demanded and supported. Instead, Peru and Bolivia have unofficially defected from the US 'war on drugs'—even while trying to maintain the perception of official compliance. This has required playing a delicate game of drug diplomacy, since US aid and diplomatic favour are conditioned on their compliance with *both* neoliberal economic guidelines and US drug control objectives.

Caught between these conflicting and contradictory international demands, Peru and Bolivia have had to prioritise one at the expense of the other. Given the major changes in the external economic environment in the last decade (especially the drying up of foreign credits and deteriorating terms of trade), and the increased leverage of the IMF and the international financial community (largely a result of the debt crisis), Peru and Bolivia have had few options other than to participate in the global economy under neoliberal rules.¹⁰ This has required adhering to strict IMF guidelines, including a commitment to servicing the foreign debt.

Failure to comply with these guidelines is difficult to obscure and generally comes at a high cost. For example, as a result of Peru's 1985–1990 refusal to allocate more than 10% of its export earnings to service its debt (as well as its experimentation with more 'heterodox' economic policies), the country was cut off from external financing and made ineligible for future loans. Peru was able to appease the IMF and the international financial community in 1990 only after committing itself to a drastic austerity programme and by making significant monthly payments to service its debt.

In contrast, it is much easier to obscure defection from the drug control campaign. For example, lack of progress in curbing drug production can often be blamed on other factors, such as corruption, bureaucratic mismanagement and inadequate resources. Even though token drug control measures and symbolic gestures—such as occasional high-profile drug seizures and arrest of traffickers—have little impact on the illegal trade, they do help appease US policymakers. Since images and symbols play such an important role in the US-sponsored drug control effort, there is significant room for deception and manipulation of perception.

While failure to comply with US drug control wishes can lead to diplomatic sanctions and a cessation of aid, this can usually be reversed by a show of new resolve. For example, while the USA suspended aid to Bolivia in 1986 because of poor results in the anti-drug programme, funding was soon restored after the Bolivian government cooperated in a highly publicised US drug control offensive called 'Operation Blastfurnace'. Although the operation was limited to a few months and had only a short-term impact on the drug trade, it did succeed (at least for the time being) in appeasing policymakers in Washington.

The measurements used to show failure or success in drug control—the

amount of drugs seized, coca crops eradicated and traffickers arrested—are highly misleading indicators that can easily be manipulated to show ‘progress’ in the battle against drugs. US policymakers have an incentive to maintain an impression of cooperation and progress on the foreign drug war front both to pacify domestic pressures and to maintain close institutional ties to Latin American security forces charged with waging the anti-drug campaign. As a result, US drug control strategists are generally more flexible than IMF officials in defining what qualifies as compliance. In short, quiet defection from the drug control campaign seems to be both easier to obscure and less costly than defection from IMF guidelines.

I first review the evolution of the coca export sector in Peru and Bolivia, and then examine the broader economic context, especially the debt crisis and growing balance of payments problems in the 1980s. The IMF-style programme adopted in Peru and Bolivia to remedy these economic ills are then explored, followed by an examination of how the drug trade has both facilitated and been encouraged by these neoliberal programmes. Some concluding observations are then made about how the contradictions between market liberalisation and drug market prohibition are obscured in the Washington policy debate, and how similar contradictory policy dynamics may be evident in other regions and issue-areas.

The coca export sector in Peru and Bolivia

The role of Peru and Bolivia in the cocaine industry is primarily as suppliers of raw materials and cheap labour. Both specialise in the land- and labour-intensive dimensions of cocaine production: the cultivation of coca and the processing of its leaves into a raw paste. While some of this paste is refined domestically, the majority is sold to Colombian traffickers who transport it to laboratories in or near Colombia. After the paste is refined into cocaine, it is transported to North American and European markets through a variety of well-established transnational smuggling networks.

While coca has long been grown in Peru and Bolivia, dramatic increases in world demand for cocaine in the last two decades has turned a crop produced on a small scale for domestic consumption into a dominant export commodity. Peruvian and Bolivian involvement in this agricultural revolution began when state officials encouraged the colonisation of semi-tropical jungle regions in an attempt to relieve peasant pressures for land and to promote agro-export development. Thousands of peasants migrated to Peru’s Upper Huallaga valley on the eastern slopes of the Andes and to Bolivia’s Chapare region in the lowlands. However, the expected infrastructure, credit and technical assistance failed to arrive.

Coca became an understandable alternative for the new peasant colonists. The incentives are not difficult to comprehend: the coca plant grows on poor soil and yields up to four or five crops each year, requires little infrastructure and start-up costs, and offers a higher return than available alternatives. Peru’s Upper Huallaga valley and Bolivia’s Chapare region quickly became the heart of world coca production.

While it is obviously impossible to provide more than rough figures on the size of the coca economy, economists estimate that Peruvian coca exports generate about \$1 billion per year—the equivalent of one-third of all legal exports.¹¹ Coca is even more significant for Bolivia. According to economist Samuel Doria Medina, 'the Bolivian economy is addicted to the coca economy'.¹² He calculates that in 1987 coca exports generated \$1.5 billion, which represented about 29% of GDP. Of this, an estimated \$600 million stayed in the country—equivalent to all legal exports combined. Some 300 000 Bolivians rely on the coca trade—about 20% of the adult workforce.¹³ Former Bolivian finance minister Flavio Machicado estimates that coca has generated up to 300 000 jobs unrelated to the drug trade.¹⁴ These are impressive figures, especially given that Bolivia has fewer than seven million inhabitants.

The economic context of the coca export boom

The importance of the coca export sector, however, can only be grasped within the context of broader economic changes in Peru and Bolivia, particularly the debt crisis which began in the early 1980s. The military governments of Peru and Bolivia borrowed heavily from international lenders in the 1970s as a means to cushion growing balance of payments problems. During the period of military rule in Peru between 1968 and 1980, the external debt grew 10 times. During the period of military rule in Bolivia, from 1971 to 1982, the foreign debt grew from \$700 million to \$3.6 billion. In both countries, much of the borrowing financed imported consumer durables and arms purchases. Thus, not surprisingly, both countries faced a deepening economic crisis by the early 1980s. Foreign credits were drying up, interest rates were rising sharply and debt obligations continued to mount. Consequently, when civilian governments in Peru and Bolivia returned to power early in the decade, they inherited extremely shaky economies.

What has been called the 'lost decade' in Latin America was particularly devastating for Peru and Bolivia. Between 1980 and 1985, the Bolivian gross national product fell by 17%, per capita consumption fell by nearly one-third, per capita income by 20% and unemployment doubled.¹⁵ During the same period, Bolivia was using 25%–30% of its export earnings to pay interest on the foreign debt. If Bolivia had actually paid all sums due, it would have had to use all its income from exports to service the debt.¹⁶

Official Bolivian exports shrank 25% between 1984 and 1986. When the government attempted to cover the growing deficit by printing money, inflation skyrocketed to 24 000% in 1985. The biggest shock came when the world price for tin, Bolivia's most important legal export, dropped by 54% between mid-1985 and mid-1986. To make matters worse, in early 1986 the price of natural gas, another major export, plummeted.

Peru faced an equally grim situation. Export revenues fell by 25% between 1980 and 1983, while total external debt grew by nearly 40% between 1980 and 1984, reaching \$14 billion by 1985. When Peru announced in 1985 that it would devote no more than 10% of its export earnings to finance the debt, the IMF declared Peru ineligible for future loans—effectively cutting the country off from external funding. Peru's trade balance, meanwhile, slipped from a positive

\$1.1 billion in 1985 to a negative \$215 million in 1988. Net international reserves shrank from a positive \$1.3 billion to a negative \$275 million. Between 1988 and 1991 Peruvian economic output shrank 30%—the steepest decline in the hemisphere. By 1992, official per capita exports had fallen in terms of real dollars to one-third of what they were in 1975. Between 1985 and 1990 average household consumption in the capital city of Lima fell by 46%. In 1989, the official inflation rate reached 2775%. Wages dropped 65%—falling below 1970 levels.

The phenomenal growth of the coca export sector has softened the blow of this economic crisis in both countries. Coca has provided foreign exchange for the cash-starved state and economic elites, and jobs and income for hundreds of thousands of Peruvian and Bolivian peasants.

The neoliberal programme

In an effort to revive their economies and make peace with international creditors and secure new loans, first Bolivia (in 1985) and then Peru (in 1990) adopted the most sweeping neoliberal market reforms and orthodox austerity measures ever attempted in Latin America. To understand why Peru and Bolivia suddenly opted to play by neoliberal economic rules requires taking into account the international pressures and constraints which shaped these policy choices. The onset of the debt crisis in the 1980s significantly increased the leverage of the USA and multilateral funding institutions over debtor countries in the developing world. As Jerome I. Levinson, a former official of the Inter-American Development Bank has commented:

[To] the US Treasury staff ... the debt crisis afforded an unparalleled opportunity to achieve, in the debtor countries, the structural reforms favored by the Reagan administration. The core of these reforms was a commitment on the part of the debtor countries to reduce the role of the public sector as a vehicle for economic and social development and rely more on market forces and private enterprise, domestic and foreign.¹⁷

While the amount and importance of external leverage is debatable,¹⁸ it is clear that the bargaining power of developing countries has declined considerably in the last decade. Barbara Stallings persuasively shows how there have been multiple forms of international pressures on debtor countries to adopt neoliberal policies. She argues that changes in the external market environment (the drying up of new financing and the sharp decline in the terms of trade), increased international linkages (transnational social and political networks and coalitions that link international and domestic actors), and the growing leverage (financial, ideological and political) of foreign creditors have all significantly shaped debtor country policy choices.¹⁹

As a result, the last decade has witnessed what Thomas Biersteker has called the 'triumph of neoclassical economies' in the developing world.²⁰ Most Third World debtor countries have adopted neoliberal market reforms and austerity measures based on IMF guidelines. The IMF 'conditionality bargain'²¹ means that

modest levels of external financial assistance are provided in exchange for market-based economic reforms.

Nowhere has this been more true than in Bolivia since 1985 and in Peru since 1990. In Bolivia, newly elected Bolivian president Victor Paz Estensorro initiated the 'New Economic Policy' (NEP), a sweeping stabilisation programme based on IMF guidelines. As part of the reform package, the financial system was deregulated, the currency was devalued nearly 100%, import and export restrictions were lifted, subsidies were cut, wages were frozen and state-owned enterprises were privatised. There were also widespread lay-offs, including the displacement of some 20 000 tin miners.

According to John Williamson, 'Bolivia is perhaps the most extreme case of the adoption of the policies that constitute the "Washington consensus" ... The Bolivia plan looks almost like a laboratory experiment of everything that Washington preaches'.²² Williamson describes the Bolivian stabilisation policy as 'the equivalent of about five [General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade] rounds, six Gramm-Rudmans and more deregulation than had been accomplished by the Carter and Reagan administrations together, all overnight'.²³ As a result, Bolivia has successfully 'reestablished its credentials with the international financial community'.²⁴

The United States has been a crucial player in this process. Not only has Washington been instrumental in Bolivia's renegotiation of its foreign debt and in securing new loans, but it has also significantly increased direct foreign aid. US funding reached more than \$180 million in 1991, making Bolivia the highest recipient of US aid in South America and one of the most aid-dependent countries in the world.

Nevertheless, the Bolivian economy remained in serious trouble following the initiation of the reform programme. Real wages were down 40% in 1987 from 1985 levels. Industry was operating at between 40%–50% of capacity. With the withdrawal of state subsidies, the country's already extremely small industrial sector shrank further: 120 factories closed down between 1985 and 1991. Mining production fell by 20% in 1985 and by 37% in 1986. Mineral exports, which brought in \$641 million in 1980, contributed a mere \$131 million in 1986. Unemployment increased significantly. The country's terms of trade dropped by 20.7% in 1986, 8.8% in 1987 and 10.2% in 1988. The value of exports declined continuously from 1985 to 1988. The foreign debt still remained one of the highest foreign debts in the world in relation to GNP. By the end of 1988, outstanding debt still amounted to around 100% of GDP and 700% of recorded exports, while debt service payments actually made during 1988 took up over one-half of official export revenues.²⁵

By the criteria of the USA and the IMF, however, Bolivia's bold economic programme was immediately viewed as largely a success. Hyperinflation was tamed, the currency was stabilised and the government showed a clear commitment to market-based reforms such as financial deregulation and privatisation of state-owned industries. As the World Bank representative in Bolivia stated in 1987, 'This is a country that for the first time is functioning in an orderly and logical manner'.²⁶ A December 1989 IMF press release also praised the Bolivian performance:

Since the start of the economic reform program in late 1985, Bolivia has made substantial progress in correcting financial imbalances and economic distortions. Economic activity has expanded for three consecutive years at an annual rate of 2–3 percent, and inflation was brought down to less than 14 percent in the year ended September 1989. The current account deficit of the balance of payments has narrowed over the period, and Bolivia has sharply reduced its external debt to commercial banks and certain bilateral creditors.²⁷

In an effort to replicate the Bolivian experience and regain international financial support, in August 1990 newly-elected Peruvian president Alberto Fujimori initiated a similar IMF-style economic programme. Subsidies were eliminated, state enterprises were privatised, the banking system was deregulated, foreign exchange controls were loosened and trade was liberalised.

The economic plan—called ‘Fujishock’ in Peru—succeeded in curbing inflation and reducing government costs, but came at an enormous social cost: staple food prices increased by as much as 700% in 24 hours. Gasoline prices rose 3000%. Water rates rose more than eightfold and costs for electricity quintupled. While prices skyrocketed, wages fell from previously low levels. In one month, wages of public-sector employees dropped by 59.8% and those in the private sector by 39.7%. By late 1991, an estimated 1 million workers had lost their jobs as a result of the plan’s austerity measures. Living standards dropped by 24% between 1990 and 1992. By mid-1992, a mere 10% of Lima’s population was adequately employed.

Meanwhile, Peru agreed to pay \$60 million a month towards servicing its foreign debt—the price of re-admission into the international financial community. As in Bolivia, US backing has been crucial for Peru’s efforts to renegotiate the foreign debt and secure new financing. Peru received help from a US led ‘support group’ in paying off some of its arrears with multilateral lending agencies, and returned to the good books of the IMF. Michael Camdessus, Managing Director of the Fund, announced that Peru had made ‘a clear demonstration of what should, and should not, be done ... from now on, we can support you, and we will’.²⁸ IMF-specified economic goals for Peru in 1992 were not only met but in some cases exceeded.²⁹ And after paying off arrears with the IMF and the World Bank in March 1993, Peru was immediately extended new loans.³⁰

Coca: secret ingredient of the economic reform programme

Official assessments of the Peruvian and the Bolivian economic reform programmes neglect to mention that the biggest market success story in both countries in the last decade has been the coca trade. Not only has the coca export boom helped cushion the economic crisis, but it has played an important role in helping Peru and Bolivia carry out their IMF-style economic reform programmes.

For example, as part of its economic stabilisation programme, the Bolivian government instituted a number of measures that had the effect of facilitating the direct absorption of coca revenues into the financial system, such as loosening the disclosure requirements of the Central Bank and declaring a tax amnesty on repatriated capital. New laws prohibited official inquiries into the origins of all

wealth brought into Bolivia and tellers at the Central Bank were not allowed to question the source of dollar deposits. The Bank instituted short-term certificates of deposit, which became a critical source of financing the national reserves. This effectively 'dollarised' the banking system: by 1990, 86% of bank accounts were in US dollars.³¹

The government also created a foreign exchange auction, called the *bolsin*, which allowed the Central Bank to compete with the parallel foreign exchange market for coca dollars. As explained by Javier Nogales, the former president of the Bolivian Central Bank, 'We were bringing the street rate into the official rate by letting the difference between the two disappear. We knew that the smaller the gap, the greater the influx of dollars into the Central Bank ...'³²

These measures boosted Bolivia's reserves, which in turn helped to stabilise the currency and stop hyperinflation. As Alain Labrousse explains, the coca trade 'helps to swell the currency reserves of the State and thus assists in supporting the value of the *boliviano* [the local currency] and in repaying the foreign debt'.³³

By the end of 1986, an estimated 80% of foreign exchange sales were moving through the Central Bank. Despite a deteriorating trade balance, net reserves reached \$245 million in February 1986, up from roughly the \$100 million mark in August 1985. Rolando Morales, the former president of the Bolivian association of economists, calculates that the influx of coca dollars is 'the only way we've been able to balance the balance of payments'.³⁴ While the Bolivian government adopted measures which essentially legalised the dollars generated from drug trafficking, this in no way conflicted with IMF guidelines. As Humberto Compodonico notes, 'the neoliberal recommendations of the IMF in terms of exchange rate policy coincide with the needs of governments to capture the dollars from drug trafficking'.³⁵

Bolivia's highly praised economic programme will continue to depend on the fate of the coca export sector. Bolivian political scientist Eduardo Gamarra has observed that, 'for Washington, Bolivia has become a showcase of what other nations in the region could accomplish if free-market principles are allowed to run their economies'. But, he warns, 'several prominent economists have argued that ... any downturn in the coca-cocaine economy could have grave consequences for the continued success of Bolivia's highly regarded NEP'.³⁶

The implementation of Peru's neoliberal economic programme has also been closely linked to the coca export sector. Ever since Peru began to suffer from severe balance of payments problems, the country's major banks, including the Central Bank, have operated busy branches in the main coca producing region to absorb the flow of illegal revenues. The banks also buy dollars on Ocoña street in downtown Lima, Peru's enormous informal foreign exchange market, which is supplied largely by coca dollars. Once into the banking system, these dollars can be used to meet the country's many foreign exchange needs, including financing the \$22 billion debt.

The Peruvian Central Bank became a particularly active buyer of coca dollars since the government initiated its economic reform programme in 1990—by one account purchasing an estimated \$4 million to \$13 million a day.³⁷ The government has given every incentive for coca dollars to flow into the financial

system. With the further loosening of the foreign exchange controls, the boundaries between legal and illegal dollars have become virtually irrelevant. The government encourages the repatriation of capital with no questions asked and with a tax amnesty. In short, as one economist concludes, Fujimori's neoliberal economic goals 'are being attained at the cost of an increasing dependence on dollars generated by drug trafficking'.³⁸

Not only does the coca export sector facilitate the implementation of the Peruvian and Bolivian economic reform programmes, these programmes in turn facilitate the expansion of the coca economy. First, austerity-induced unemployment has provided a steady source of cheap labour for the coca export sector. According to Kevin Healy, the economic reform programmes 'have increased poverty levels, especially in rural areas. These economic trends have contributed to the continued heavy migration to the coca growing regions ... to expand the international cocaine industry'.³⁹

Moreover, the coca trade has benefited from the adverse impact of market liberalisation on legal agricultural production in both countries.⁴⁰ In Bolivia, for example, there has been a significant decline in the terms of trade for agricultural products since 1986.⁴¹ According to the World Bank, agricultural production in Bolivia fell by 17% between 1985 and 1988.⁴² Tariff changes have generated greater agricultural imports from neighbouring countries into the Bolivian market, discouraging local production of a wide range of crops. Bolivia is at a competitive disadvantage in relation to its neighbours, thanks to inferior production technology and infrastructure.⁴³ Susanna Rance observes that the architects of the Bolivian economic programme 'claim that they expected Bolivian farming to respond favorably to the injection of "healthy competition" from abroad. But instead of being stimulated to produce more in order to keep pace with the influx of cheap imports, peasant farmers simply back out of the market, unable to compete on such unequal terms'.⁴⁴

Of course, for many of these peasant farmers, backing out of the legal market has meant backing into the coca market. Bolivia enjoys considerable comparative advantage in coca production. Thus, one of the primary beneficiaries of market liberalisation and declining conditions of agriculture in Bolivia has been the coca export sector. Coca production expanded at an annual rate of 13.4% between 1985 and 1988.⁴⁵ In effect, the neoliberal economic programme has, at least for now, exacerbated the country's dependence on the coca export sector. Peasant labour federations, representing Bolivia's coca growers, have denounced the economic programme on the grounds that it discourages alternatives to coca and deepens their reliance on coca production.⁴⁶

The further opening of the Peruvian and Bolivian economies has only created greater incentives to rely on their world market niche in coca production. This is certainly consistent with the logic of laissez-faire economics, especially the theory of comparative advantage. Yet while the coca industry is the quintessential expression of market-driven private enterprise, US officials nevertheless seem to assume that they can encourage market liberalisation and entrepreneurialism in all economic arenas—except for the drug trade.

At least for the time being, the sobering reality is that there is depressingly little the world market wants from Peru and Bolivia other than coca. Despite

major economic reform efforts, the legal export sector continues to stagnate in both countries. And the few alternatives to coca that do exist are unlikely to provide the same kind of returns. This is especially true given that the value of most commodities produced by developing countries has dropped significantly in the last decade. Thus, the combination of heavy debts and poor export earnings means that Peru and Bolivia cannot afford to be too discriminating about where their foreign exchange earnings come from.

Conclusion: institutionalised denial

Acknowledging, discussing, or even suggesting the possibility that the drug trade and neoliberal economic policies actually fuel each other rarely enters the official policy debate in Washington. If anything, there tends to be an uncritical acceptance of the assumption that market-based policy reforms contribute to the fight against drugs. Since it is largely taken for granted that neoliberalism is good medicine for the economic ills in Peru and Bolivia, then this must also be good medicine for their recovery from the ills of the drug trade.

In general, however, evaluations of drug policy and economic reform policy are noticeably divorced. Congressional committees and government agencies endlessly debate over the best law enforcement tactics to attack the coca supply and gain greater Peruvian and Bolivian cooperation in the effort. Countless State Department reports and congressional hearings document the number of coca processing labs destroyed, crops eradicated and traffickers arrested in order to show 'progress' in the anti-drug campaign. Poor results are blamed on corruption, mismanagement and insufficient resources. Improved results are assumed to come from tougher and more efficient law enforcement. Given the nature and definition of the drug control mission, those charged with carrying it out (from at least 58 federal agencies and 74 congressional committees⁴⁷) have neither the incentive nor the responsibility to confront the uncomfortable reality that the highly-praised economic reform programmes in Peru and Bolivia both feed and feed from the drug trade.

Economic reform strategists, meanwhile, carefully monitor the Peruvian and Bolivian debt service records, export earnings, inflation levels and the pace of market liberalisation. As far as they are concerned, asparagus, not coca, is Peru's most important agricultural export. The progress reports they publish rarely even mention the coca trade, let alone discuss its links to the formal economy and market reforms. Given the nature and definition of their mission, economic reform strategists have neither the incentive nor the responsibility to discuss the issue.

Thus, while neoliberal and prohibition policies in Peru and Bolivia work at cross-purposes, policymakers have so far been able to avoid confronting or even acknowledging this awkward situation. The problem has been obscured through institutionalised denial, made possible in large part by the compartmentalisation of the policy-making process and the distinct and insular policy frameworks within which those charged with carrying out the two policies operate. Drug control strategists and economic reform strategists clearly respond to different pressures, represent different interests, use different modes of evaluation, operate

within different institutional settings and are focused on different kinds of problems. Consequently, neoliberal and prohibition policies in Peru and Bolivia have shown a remarkable capacity to co-exist—even as they work at cross-purposes.

While the focus here has been on the illegal drug trade, it may be possible to extend the same kind of analysis to other issues, such as illegal immigration. In Mexico, sweeping neoliberal market reforms have received strong support from Washington, yet may also conflict with the US goal of curbing illegal immigration. For example, roughly one million people are expected to abandon farming every year for the next decade or two as a result of the liberalisation of agriculture – and 'El Norte' will be a logical destination for many. More broadly, attempting to open the US-Mexican border to the free flow of legal commerce (through the North American Free Trade Agreement) while at the same time attempting to close the border to the illegal flow of people (through stricter border enforcement) may be a recipe for policy frustration.⁴⁸

Although the parallels should not be overstated, it may also be possible to extend at least part of the analysis to countries outside Latin America which are implementing neoliberal economic programmes. For example, as the 'Bolivia model' of economic reform has been adopted by Eastern European countries such as Poland, there has also been an enormous expansion of illegal economic activity, including drug production and trafficking. How similar or different these emerging trends in the periphery of Europe are to those we have already witnessed in the periphery of the Americas remains to be seen.

Notes

¹ I wish to thank James Kurth and Jonas Pontusson for their comments on earlier drafts of this article.

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Popular religion and politics in sub-Saharan Africa

JEFF HAYNES

Africa's 'second liberation' or 'second independence' in the early 1990s involved a series of widespread political upheavals. Throughout the region popular demands focused on democratisation, economic reforms and human rights. Popular desire for political and economic reform seemed to be widespread, reflecting an awakening of political voice on the part of a number of groups in civil society. Various groups and individuals—including trade union officials, higher education students, business people, civil servants and junior and middle ranking religious figures—initially led and coordinated popular efforts.¹ Demands were later focused, made integral parts of political programmes, by professional politicians. The expectation was that popular efforts would force long-entrenched, often venal governments from office. Democratic regimes would take power. New leaders would tackle with energy, resourcefulness and imagination pressing economic problems; previously ignored political constituencies would be heard; human rights would be observed, including the precious freedom to criticise governments without fear of incarceration.

By mid-1994 agitation for change had resulted in the ousting of a number of rulers, including those of Benin, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Niger, São Tomé, Sierra Leone and Zambia. Others demonstrated their ability to stay put, either by winning (sometimes) 'free-and-fair' elections or by simply refusing to budge.

Recent demands for political and economic changes in Africa have paralleled those of the 1950s in relation to colonial rule; hence the allusion above to a *second* independence or liberation. In the era of anti-colonial agitation, coalitions of associational groups challenged imperial governments for power. Professional, student and labour groups led popular protest against rulers who were commonly perceived as unfit to govern: they were European, against African aspirations and unrepresentative. In the 1950s the goal was overwhelmingly nationalist in focus, 'Self-Rule, now!', the rallying cry. Forty years later European administrations had just about everywhere been replaced by African regimes which had often proved disastrous failures at *ruling*, if we understand that term to include some responsibility to seek to increase citizens' well-being in a regularised and systematic way.

Demands for democratisation and economic change in Africa can best be explained as a rediscovery of political voice by long quiescent interest groups, encouraged by international developments, whose concerns were understandably exacerbated by years of popular frustration and disappointment that the promises of independence had turned out to be hollow. There were also individuals, notably senior Christian figures, who added their voices to the clamour for

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change. What is significant is that they had not done so during the anti-colonial agitation, yet they chose to do so 40 years later. Why?

The simple answer is that in the 1950s senior Christian leaders in sub-Saharan Africa were overwhelmingly European. They supported colonial rule not only because they often shared racial bonds with colonial administrators or because the latter supplied a framework for the rule of law and the development of 'civilisation', but also because they were members of the colonial socioeconomic elite with a stake in the continuation of the status quo. Thus there were class, racial and institutional bonds which bound senior Christian figures to the colonial regimes.

Until the 1960s and the growing Africanisation of the Church, most senior Christian figures as well as clergy and missionaries were Europeans; some even served during the colonial period as *de facto* or *de jure* government officials.² In addition, there was the powerful cultural and political norm of separation of church and state which had underpinned the emergence and consolidation of the secular state in Western Europe from the 17th century. While the missionaries were rarely the tools of secular rule alone, and indeed often earned the opprobrium of government administrators and white settlers for siding with 'natives' against the latter on land issues, manifestations of non-compliance with the imperial will were one of degree rather than anything more fundamental.³

Forty years later, senior Christian figures, including leading Catholics, were frequently involved in the national conferences on various states' political futures. These were especially common in a number of French-speaking countries: Congo, Togo, Mali, Niger, Gabon, Zaire and Chad. The outcome in Congo was the election of a democratic regime, although the political situation remained tense. In Togo, Chad, Gabon and Zaire, on the other hand, such conferences did not lead to new constitutions or new political arrangements in the short term. Mobutu and Eyadema stayed put; oppositions were too weak to unseat them, stalemate was the outcome. In Chad, the continuing Christian-Muslim polarisation meant that the political situation remained volatile. In Gabon, Omar Bongo retained power, despite the registration of 13 political parties and a powerful although unsuccessful challenge from an opposition leader, Paul Mba-Abesole (a Catholic priest) and his movement, le Rassemblement de Boucherons (National Society of Woodcutters). In mostly Muslim Niger and Mali new political leaders and governments emerged. What this suggests is that the power of the Catholic leaders to force or even oversee change was by no means overwhelming.

The involvement of Christian leaders in the national democracy conferences reflects the way the Church is one of the few national institutions which has managed to keep a degree of corporate independence from the state. Popular demands for fundamental change were a result, not only of the socioeconomic effects of authoritarian government, but also of the disappointments engendered by three decades of independence and modernisation.

Two main issues form the focus of this article. The first is the relationship of senior religious figures to the state. The second is the political importance of 'popular' religions. The aim is to examine the role of both these aspects of the interaction and relationship of religion and politics in sub-Saharan Africa. The

first task is to establish the nature of the links between senior religious figures and state elites. The second is to make some preliminary observations about popular religions.

State and religion in comparative perspective

Leaders of mainstream or orthodox African religious bodies—whether Christian or Muslim—are products of the societies from which they come. As individuals, they may be theoretically and intellectually convinced of the benefits of democracy, understanding that concept in both structural (appropriate political institutions, independent legislature and judiciary) and normative ('real' competition, worthwhile civic freedoms) terms. Yet they also have to go about their daily business in an environment characterised by state heavy-handedness, the threat or expectation of military involvement in politics, shortages of economic resources, venality, corruption, suspicion between ethnic groups and often bitter competitiveness and rivalry between religious faiths. The result is that their personal opinions on the theoretical desirability of democracy are often, and often necessarily, partially moulded by the pursuit of individualistic material concerns which have to be pursued within the extant socioeconomic system.

Some analysts have regarded the leaders of the orthodox (as distinct from the independent) churches as highly significant actors in the current democratisation era.⁴ To them, leading Christians have dragged unwilling, undemocratic governments towards the dreaded ballot box. The argument is that leaders of orthodox churches are often in the forefront of pro-democracy agitation not only because they are democrats personally (as a result of their Christianity), but also because their 'flocks' have collectively experienced diminishing benefits from non-democratic rule. Individuals and communities suffered over a long period of time the results of a malevolent interaction of poor government, bad economic policies and unworkable ideological programmes. In short, Africa's emergence into a new era—one characterised by more democratic governance and the empowerment of ordinary people—is, it is argued, the result of Christian leaders' tenacity, clear-sightedness and lack of fear of the consequences of their actions, coupled with a burning sense of outrage on behalf of their followers. Proponents of the 'Christians as necessarily democrats' argument also point to an interaction of both international and domestic factors to explain how Christian leaders have been prominent in pro-democracy campaigns in several parts of the world. Diamond notes how:

religious institutions, especially the Catholic Church, have been prominent in the movements of a great many countries—notably, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, Nicaragua, the Philippines, South Korea, Poland, Haiti, South Africa, and most recently Kenya—to oppose, denounce, frustrate and remove authoritarian regimes.⁵

Christian institutional independence and integrity in relation to state power is seen by Peel as an essential facet of the post-colonial African structure of power relations:

Because, in the main, most expressions of the world religions tended to be unidentified with the main interest groups, whether ethnic or class, they were

available in a diffuse form as a mediating element, relatively neutral ground, in social and political conflict. Religious institutions were therefore generally accorded respect by the political elite.⁶

Peel's argument locates both Christian and Muslim religious institutions as interlocutors between state and society, respected bodies whose leaders' own personal desires and preferences are subsumed in their concern to mediate impartially between citizens and government.

My argument is that such institutions are in fact class actors in partnership with the ruling regime; it is actually aberrant for official religious institutions to confront the state other than in rather formulaic fashion. Democratic initiatives are often little more than successful strategies of passive revolution. This is because leading members of religious hierarchies are intimately bound up with state representatives in a continuing project to maintain a hegemonial domination over society. The purpose of mediating between factions is to settle intra-elite disputes between those seeking state power, rather than between those involved in wider societal conflict involving upper and subordinate class forces. Leaders of orthodox or mainstream religions (both Christian and Muslim) enjoy a much closer relationship with the state than less favoured, popular religious groups. They are nearly always supportive of the status quo.

Given that Muslims are sometimes regarded as less concerned with democracy than Christians,⁷ it is ironic that two of the seven countries which held national conferences on new political arrangements in the early 1990s, Mali and Niger, were both strongly Muslim countries. Islam is usually regarded in Western analysis as an authoritarian, even totalitarian, religion whose proponents seek to impose fundamentalist Islam as a means of purifying society. What Islamic fundamentalists are said to want—the establishment of *Sharia* law—is of course regarded as anathema by non-Muslims.

Three issues contextualise a discussion of the role of Islam in sub-Saharan Africa. The first is that there are a number of versions of Islam. Many Africans belong to Sufi brotherhoods; in addition, many ethnic groups, especially in West and East Africa, converted to Islam en masse; some of them will also be members of Sufi brotherhoods, so the latter may also have an ethnic dimension. Orthodox conceptions of Islam—always Sunni in sub-Saharan Africa—are the province of the religious elite, the *ulama*, the religio-legal scholars. Thus, 'Islam' in sub-Saharan Africa is in fact a multifaceted term which covers a number of Muslim interpretations of the faith. Islam in sub-Saharan Africa can be divided into three distinct categories, which correspond to extant social, cultural and historical divisions. The first includes the dominant sociopolitical and cultural position of Islam in the emirates of northern Nigeria, the lamidates of northern Cameroon and the shiekhdoms of northern Chad. In each of these areas, religious and political power is fused in a few individuals; a class structure has developed based on religious differentiation.⁸ Second, there are the areas where Sufi brotherhoods predominate: generally in West and East Africa, and especially in Senegal, the Gambia, Niger, Mali, Guinea, Kenya and Tanzania. Finally, in a number of African states, Muslims, fragmented by ethnic and regional concerns,

are politically marginalised as a bloc. This is the situation in, *inter alia*, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Cote d'Ivoire.

The second factor is that 'fundamentalist' Islam is rare in black Africa. This is because Sufi Islam—the faith of the majority—is actually a target for fundamentalists—found within the *ulama* and their secular allies—because it is regarded as a primitive or degraded form of Islam which must be reformed or 'purified'. Fundamentalist Islam is of political importance in Sudan (where it is the ruling ideology) and in northern Nigeria where tension between Muslims and Christians is an important political issue.

Third, there is an ambivalence in the way that many Muslims regard the concept of liberal democracy itself. Many Muslims oppose Western interpretations of democracy, where sovereignty resides with the people, because it is seen as a system which negates God's own sovereignty. Members of the *ulama* will usually be strong supporters of the status quo, because it allows them to be integrally involved in the running of the affairs of Muslims in their state through their control of national Muslim organisations. Their partnership with state politicians is thus crucial.

Ruling politicians seek to achieve or maintain domination over society by developing an ideology of their own legitimacy, of justifying the status quo, through a pursuit of an often putative 'national unity'. Bolstering and underlying 'national unity' concerns is a hegemonic thrust, 'which drives the state and the self-proclaimed dominant social groups to seek to control and to shape civil society'.⁹ Class concerns in Africa (understood in a Weberian rather than an analytically less useful Marxist sense) coalesce, dominate and override all other issues, except sometimes ethnicity. Political officials may well also be merchants and businessmen: how else to make a profit in a context of low remuneration for employment? Clergy are the same: economic stringency leads religious actors to behave in a distinctly secular way. That is, they will attempt to use their network of contacts to advance their own self interest; this gives them an important political role in the same way that businessmen and women develop contacts with political elites for mutual benefit.

Those who make it to the top of ecclesiastical structures are selectively recruited according to educational attainments and perhaps ethnic affinity, gradually socialised into the world of the political and social elites, and rewarded materially for their loyalty to the struggle to maintain the political status quo. What develops is a kind of hegemonial coalition with secular political leaders which has as its central goal the maintenance of order and the continuation of elite control.

Only occasionally do circumstances combine in such a way that religious leaders find themselves propelled to the forefront of popular opposition to state power. The issue here is the relationship of the sacred to the temporal. In the Christian conception the two realms of God and Caesar provide a theoretically clearcut division of labour: religion is concerned with the spiritual aspects of life, politics with the more material concerns. Thus, for Christian leaders, there is no compulsion to propound on clearly political issues provided they do not have an impact upon the ability to practise religion. Provided that religious worship is tolerated by the state, democracy *per se* is not all that relevant to an expression

of a belief in God or in the ability of the followers of a religion to worship. Religious professionals believe that during their daily work they are performing God's mission to the best of their ability. They will be as certain as possible that their vocation is morally right, essential for the spiritual health of their countrymen and women. There may be occasional doubts of what may be described as a 'technical' character, ie they 'may doubt whether a particular action in operation or contemplation most expediently advances [their] larger life purposes, about which [they] can never be in any doubt'.¹⁰ In other words, religious leaders' long-term goals are clear; short-term expediency, while regrettable, is not of profound importance in relation to the overriding objective of achieving God's kingdom on earth.

The implication is that God ultimately ordains all political and social authority on earth. The separation of church and state in Western Europe created a pattern of behaviour in which Christianity's division from secular power became increasingly central to sovereignty issues. This sacred-temporal division was bolstered by the rise of secular nation-states in the 19th century in Europe.¹¹ During the colonial era, Western European notions of statehood and sovereignty were transplanted to Africa. Among them were those ideas relating to Christianity's role in relation to the state, even though they derived from Western Europe's particular sociocultural background and history.

The Roman Catholic church provides the best example of a religious organisation whose mundane institutional structure has been created to most expeditiously allow God's representative—the Pope—to rule in a singular fashion. The role of the Catholic church in Africa is of some importance both because of the large numbers of Africans who are baptised Catholics—some 90–100 million—and because the Church is the only religious institution which is a self-financing transnational organisation. Historically, the Church has been regarded as 'conservative, corporatist, and hostile to liberal democracy'.¹²

The tradition of Catholicism's acceptance of the status quo (as long as it is a conservative permanence) largely derives in a spiritual sense from the teachings of St Augustine and of Thomas Aquinas. Aquinas's recommendation of 'a faith in God which sees reason in the world [as it is] and on the whole advises acceptance of things as they are' signifies that both 'spiritual and worldly authority and hierarchy are welcomed and accepted'.¹³ Secular rulers have a necessary social function to perform. As in the Islamic conception of mundane power, as long as secular rulers satisfactorily perform their allotted social functions (citizen protection, threat removal, perpetuation of morally correct social values) religious leaders and believers should support them. That is, citizens have a religious duty to obey government as long as it acts according to the law. It follows from this that secular and divine authority are in harmony with each other because their goals are similar; the former are seeking societal acceptance of the laws which themselves derive ultimate spiritual authority from God. When it is necessary for the state to punish miscreants for disobeying society's laws, it is reinforcing divine law. Overall, then, in Aquinas's Cristocentric view of politics, the ruler's role is defined by both duty and prudence. The secular ruler is the agent of both earthly and divine order. Society should be governed by laws which are ultimately sanctioned by God.

It is usually only when rulers appear to be governing in a manner which seems to be at odds with God's law that the Christian hierarchies will see fit to make their disquiet public. For example, Zaire's Conference of Roman Catholic Bishops' memorandum to President Mobutu in March 1990 criticised the political system from the point of view of its structure which, they claimed, was against reason and natural law. Zaire, the bishops argued, had a 'hybrid' political system which juxtaposed a 'liberalism', offering significant rewards to a small minority, with a regime philosophy of 'totalitarianism', which sought to gather all power to itself. Significantly, the Memorandum suggested ways to reform the existing system rather than suggest the creation of a new one according to different philosophical principles. Mobutu himself was regarded as a misled national saviour, rather than as the main impediment to national progress.¹⁴ In other words, the thrust of the bishop's memorandum was reformist, rather than radical or revolutionary. Yet, despite the emolient tone and reasonable language employed, of the claimed 6128 memoranda received on the issue of the political way forward for Zaire, the government refused to consider it along with the rest because Mobutu feared endorsing the right of religious leaders to offer political advice.¹⁵

It follows from this that Catholic (and other mainstream religious) leaders will sometimes openly criticise temporal rulers if they appear to be departing too radically from the path of reason and law. It does not imply that they will have an alternative programme to offer, but rather that, once public opinion on an issue appears to be moving steadily in a certain direction, Christian leaders will add their weight to it. This also implies that Christian leaders will acquiesce in regimes' policies for as long as there is insufficient public opinion against them, especially when the claimed justification for authoritarian rule is national unity. Furthermore, religious leaders will themselves be beneficiaries of the order which authoritarian or dictatorial regimes can impose. Under these circumstances there is normally little temptation to protest too long or too loud unless overwhelming public opinion is on their side.

Post-colonial norms of state-church interaction are contextualised by the imperial past. Because the mission churches were so closely linked in the minds of nationalist politicians with European secular power, there remains a residual suspicion of their post-colonial African successors in the minds of contemporary rulers. This is one important reason why Christian fundamentalist churches, often regarded as a dangerous American import by insecure regimes, are perceived with suspicion. The response of governments, suspicious of the motivations and aims of Christian churches, has been at times to seek to control their numbers. In Zaire, for example, only three churches were officially allowed to operate until the early 1990s, in line with the pursuit of 'authenticité', but also in order to control them and keep their leaders beholden to the regime.¹⁶ Kenyatta's government, on the other hand, used a different tactic of control: it sought to diminish the social importance of the Anglican church by encouraging independent African churches in order to increase the number of churches overall, so that the Anglican voice would be only one among many. To encourage the support of independent church leaders, state jobs, including Cabinet positions, were found for the leaders of several of the independent

churches.¹⁷ The uncharacteristic willingness of the Anglican church in Kenya to tangle with the government is explained by the fact that, during colonial times, the overwhelmingly European congregation at Nairobi's Anglican cathedral was described as 'the colonial power at prayer'.¹⁸ After independence the tradition of 'voice' rather than silence remained, at least for a while. Usually, however, the Christian churches were unwilling to pronounce on political issues. During the rule of Idi Amin Dada in Uganda in the 1970s, for example, 'the churches found themselves dragged against their will, into becoming foci of opposition'.¹⁹

The point is that it is unusual for the mainstream Christian churches' voice to be heard in relation to political issues for a number of reasons. Apart from the idea that secular rulers are divinely sanctioned and thus beyond mundane attack, there are also other considerations: the former mission Christian churches in Africa are to an extent compromised by their colonial past; they are also uncomfortably vulnerable to the state's power of control. Cooperation often seems the best policy for these reasons alone, although there are others, as we shall see in the next section. The encouragement of independent churches by the Kenyatta regime and then its successor was the exception rather than the norm. Far more common was a situation where the mainstream churches and orthodox Islamic leaders were in a relationship with the state where both parties benefited. The nature of that relationship forms the focus of the next section.

Hegemony and power

The Gramscian idea of hegemony is highly relevant to a conception of power in Africa.²⁰ It involves the creation and institutionalisation of a pattern of group activity in a state with a concomitant espousal of an idealised framework that strives to present itself as 'common sense'. Hegemony also helps to explain how such characteristics as culture, social formation and political institutions, involving individuals and corporate bodies, fit together in a concept of power.²¹ The concept of hegemony makes it easier to locate the state-civil society relationship, the elite counterelite dichotomy, and the division between those with and those without adequate resources to prosper, within a useful analytical framework.

Central to an analysis of hegemony is the nature of power itself. It is insufficient to see power as merely the ability of one group or individual to gain the acquiescence or, at least, quiescence, of another because of the fear of the consequences of non-compliance. Power should rather be thought of as a two-faceted, sometimes contradictory force: in Cox's expression 'power is a centaur, part man, part beast, a combination of force and consent'.²² This is the crux of hegemony: the iron fist fills the velvet glove; the former is uncovered only when deemed necessary. There is an exemplary enforcement potential, force underlies the power structure; the strong can (and will) crush the weak when necessary; and the latter know this. Yet the use of force to gain compliance will be the last, or at least not the first, option. Indeed, force wielded by the dominant against the subordinate will not be necessary (or only rarely) if that domination is seen as legitimate, even necessary. In other words, force will not

be resorted to as long as the subordinate classes regard upper class domination as right and proper, or at least tolerable.

Subordinate classes will be more inclined to view their position with relative equanimity as long as the dominant class seeks to rule by at least a modicum of consent, rather than by absolutist or dictatorial means. The dominant class must, therefore, be concerned with the form as much as the content of its rule. Might alone cannot routinely be effective; it must be tempered with a practical concern to keep social relations relatively trouble free—a concern to rule by law as far as possible must be evident. Above all, members of the ruling class must express their leadership by allusion to general, rather than specific, interests, such as 'national unity' or 'national self-determination'. Often, especially historically in Western European contexts, the development of (more or less) popular institutions is seen as the key for success of a hegemonic strategy. This is because institutions help to coalesce diverse interests within a single body, giving rise to consensus and to a universalisation of policy over time. Many ordinary people perceive that power relations *are as they should be when the state achieves its objectives without dissent*: it is only 'right' that politicians and state officials rule authoritatively, that is their role.

The goal of those involved in the hegemonial quest is to create what Williams calls a 'unified moral order', in which 'a certain way of life and thought is dominant, in which one concept of reality is diffused throughout society'.²³ In much of Africa, the 'moral order' is one where, notwithstanding increasingly ineffective appeals to 'national unity', individuals do all they can to advance their personal interests and those of their families and other favoured groups.

In order to locate the notion of hegemony in a form which is conducive to analysis it is necessary to explain what the state is in Africa. It is best understood as the sum of two theoretically separate, yet in practice interlinked, developments: first, a rapacious *structure* of interlinked interests (involving the creation and perpetuation of clientelistic relationships), where 'public institutions [are] colonized and emasculated';²⁴ and, second, a hegemonial *process* whereby political figures engage in pursuit of power. Forrest suggests that 'state rulers are defined by and obtain their power and resources on the basis of their officeholding'.²⁵ The same form of structure–process can be applied to orthodox religious institutions. Leading figures within them will join together in a theocratic 'class' which seeks to advance their personal, as well as their institution's, position in relation to competitors. The crux of the matter for temporal as for religious leaders is that public office brings private profit, creating in the process a class structure which develops on the basis of a social differentiation which is rooted in the practicalities of wealth accumulation, rather than in relation to the productive process. As a result, a hegemonic striving unites individuals and groups within the national power structure, including mainstream religious leaders. Certainly, *some* of the accrued wealth trickles down to those outside the state parameters: it is assured by the conglomeration of clientelistic, familial and kin relationships. Thus, the 'state' is not merely the sum of its official institutional parts, but rather there is a *partial interpenetration* of the African state and society, where clientelist ties are the cement holding the system together. Religious institutions and figures are by no means exempt. To

many ordinary Africans the success of a religion is reflected in the ability of its leaders to exhibit a high level of material wealth; how else is it clear that God smiles on the religion's leading figures? This was, of course, why many Africans converted either to Christianity or to Islam: the idea of a supreme God was already culturally acceptable;²⁶ the weakness of the old gods was demonstrated conclusively by their inability to see off the new one. Material benefits, it was believed, would accrue to those who 'signed up' for the new religion and sundered their ties with the old.

It has been noted in many accounts how politics in Africa is characterised by the importance of patrimonial and clientelist relationships.²⁷ 'The big man, small boy syndrome' dominates political, social and economic relationships between individuals. Virtually everyone who has an official capacity has the essential wherewithal to benefit in some way from his or her position. The intermingling of public and private concerns is by no means unusual in Africa: the patrimonial notion of power and the position of the individual in relation to the community coalesce in an understanding that power, whether spiritual, political or economic, brings profit.²⁸ Individuals develop mutually beneficial relationships with both subordinates and superiors. In political competition the cultivation of networks of reciprocity is a *sine qua non* for the aspirant politician and the incumbent power-holder. Those who fail to maintain their network of relationships are likely to fall prey to the shifts of politics, to find themselves ousted from the positions which gave them power in the first place. Because religious institutions have to survive in an environment of resource shortages, their structural characteristics and the types of interaction between individuals closely parallels those in the secular realm. There is extensive interaction between religious elites and the representatives of state power for mutual benefit.²⁹

Paralleling that which pertains in the Christian context, there are also Islamic sub systemic patrimonial systems which thrive in certain areas. In the northern Nigerian emirates, the northern Cameroonian lamidates, and in the tribal sheikdoms of northern Chad, the socioreligious culture melds both Islam and Arabic systems of patrimonial domination, in ways which closely resemble the social structures of North Africa and the Middle East.³⁰ In Senegal there is a different arrangement whereby Sufi marabouts have retained—and in many cases extended—important political and economic positions which developed during the era of French colonialism. The leader of the most important brotherhood, the Muridiyya, does not hold an official state post, yet is regarded as especially politically powerful because of his hold over his disciples among the Wolof people and because of their collective economic clout. 'Members of the Muridiyya brotherhood grow the bulk of the country's major export crop, groundnuts'.³¹

Senegal's preponderance of followers of one religion, Islam, (some 90% or more of the population are Muslims) is unusual in sub-Saharan Africa. Generally, there is a high degree of religious heterogeneity in the states of the region. Thinkers since Aristotle have taken it for granted that religious homogeneity is a prerequisite for political stability. Certainly, in Africa the relationship between the state and religious leaders will often be complicated by the fact that there are many religious organisations in a polity. If one set of religious figures can offer

(or at least promise to try to offer) their followers' compliance to the rule of the current regime—as Muridiyya marabouts have traditionally managed to do in Senegal—then it will be of great importance for a government to strike a mutually advantageous relationship with the leaders of that religion. Yet the situation does not have to be characterised by the favouring of but *one* religion over others. Governments may well establish a working relationship with the most important religions (Zaire's government's official recognition of three religions is a case in point), say, Islam, Catholicism, the leading Protestant church and perhaps an independent church, and create a degree of hegemony which is founded on limited religious diversity and maximal elite cooperation. In this kind of arrangement there is no necessity for religious competition to undermine a collectively advantageous arrangement.

Being a *de facto* member of the state framework gives senior religious leaders the opportunity to amass personal wealth, in just the same way as other leaders of important societal groups, such as senior trade union officials, leaders of professional bodies, top civil servants and ethnic leaders, do. There are of course no doubt some senior religious figures who whole-heartedly devote themselves to the spiritual health and welfare of their followers without developing additional sources of remuneration; nevertheless many others do.

Networks of reciprocity involve religious organisations in sub-Saharan Africa in three ways. First, as already suggested, religious leaders will normally, but not invariably, cooperate with state power for both pecuniary and spiritual advantage. Threats may be issued; rewards may be offered and received. The aim either way is to ensure compliance with state objectives of control. Second, churches have been greatly influenced by what Gifford refers to as the 'Big Man model'.³² Just as in secular contexts, senior and middle-ranking religious figures, while no doubt personally convinced of the spiritual efficacy of the religion which they embrace, may in addition understand their job primarily as a means to enhanced well being. Family members and ethnic allies may be rewarded with jobs. Profits accrue to religious big men from their worldly business interests.³³ In Togo, for example, some Catholic prelates are referred to as 'autoritaro-prebendier' (ie authoritarian and prebendalist).³⁴ On the other hand, the position of more lowly priests may be on the decline: some accounts suggest that a serious decline in applications to African Roman Catholic seminaries is related to the perception that the priesthood's social and economic position has seriously diminished in recent times.³⁵

Third, leaders of African religious organisations profit from their relationships with foreign non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Western NGOs, mindful of state corruption which sees financial resources disappear into private pockets, often prefer to deal with church organisations which are deemed to use the money in more constructive ways, as well as being relatively independent of state control. Foreign donors, including those which have no formal links with religious organisations such as the United States organisation, Agency for International Development (USAID), pump money into church organisations which are judged to be more 'honest' and accountable than governments in disbursing funds. Yet some reports suggest that favoured recipients utilise part of the funds for their own purposes.³⁶

This section has argued that leaders of mainstream religious organisations occupy an important role as interlocutor between state officials and their followers which helps the former to govern without too many overt challenges to their rule. To maintain their influential positions it is of course necessary for leaders of the mainstream religions to retain their followers; they must seek to prevent defections as far as possible to competitor religions and to seek to bring religious 'dissidents' under their control. It is for this reason important for them to head off religious challenges to their position. In recent times, hegemonial religious leaders of mainstream Muslim and Christian bodies have found themselves threatened by a remarkable increase in unofficial sects and churches. In the next section, I want to shift the emphasis to the second focus of this account of the relationship of state and religious organisations, ie to the popular religious groups and their impact upon the state-society relationship.

Popular religion and the challenge to hegemony

For many ordinary Africans, 'politics' is something to be kept at arm's length as far as possible. It is something rather unsavoury, connoting the often dubious goings on between elite groups.³⁷ On the other hand, it is undeniable that many ordinary people took to the streets in the early 1990s to protest at the effects of *political* decisions which had affected their lives deleteriously. The issue of the dividing lines between politics and other social actions is clearcut within the social sciences. Often rather arbitrary disciplinary divisions between politics, sociology and economics lead us to assume that reality may be divided so neatly. But it is not often so easy to put 'messy' reality into such discrete pigeonholes. In accounts of African politics it has traditionally been regarded as rather difficult to pigeon-hole individuals in relation to their class, because the usual Marxist categories are deemed less useful than in some other contexts. In the same way, the relationship of religion and politics from a lower class perspective is usually dealt with by seeking to explain popular religious movements by pointing to their sometimes 'hidden' political objectives.³⁸ This approach is problematic. For a start it is difficult to be sure where 'religion' ends and 'politics' begins. During the colonial period, religious movements were often actually both anti-colonial movements and concerned with internal sociocultural reform.³⁹ It is not, therefore, analytically necessary to ascertain whether a religious or a political or a social objective is paramount. It is useful to understand movements as often involving a combination of motivations which defy easy, and precise, pigeon-holing.

Most Africans regard themselves as religious people, believing in a God (or gods) which overlooks them and what they do. Many believe that religious worship is a means to an improvement in their mundane position. In other words, it is actually rather difficult to tell when an individual's motivations are 'religious' or 'political', or whatever. Schatzberg argues that social dynamics in sub-Saharan Africa are best viewed as a 'triple-stranded helix of state, class, and ethnicity'.⁴⁰ The metaphor of the triple-strand is also useful to an understanding of the role of popular religion. In my account, the triple helix comprises religion, ethnicity and politics. Each is present within an individual's world-view, and 'in

some situations, and at certain times, one component will be dominant'.⁴¹ Sometimes ethnicity and religion form the context for political action. On other occasions, political concerns will be imbued with either ethnic or religious notions which help to determine the nature of a collective response. What I am getting at is that spiritual and material concerns interact within highly fluid boundaries in a context where many Africans relate to religion as a means of solving a number of personal problems, some of which will be material issues.

As noted earlier, in order to perpetuate hegemony successfully, it is necessary for the dominant strata to maintain a more-or-less consensual moral order which has the status of common sense. Subordinate classes accept such a moral order, according to materialist analysis, out of a 'false consciousness'. This allows the ruling elite to rule through consent rather than relying too heavily upon coercion. This should not be taken too far in the African context: hegemony is rarely achieved on the basis of social and popular consent alone; coercion is always a highly useful option for the authorities to maintain social control. The false consciousness argument is not a convincing explanation of why subordinate-class Africans obey the authorities (when they do, which is by no means all of the time); obedience is undoubtedly as often due to a well-founded fear of the consequences of not toeing the line. Because of the fear of the consequences as well as the social divisions extant in most African societies, it is usually difficult to see unified political actions undertaken by subordinate classes in pursuit of their class interests. It is by no means clear whether subordinate-class Africans perceive their interests to be best fulfilled by class action rather than by 'plugging in' to the networks of reciprocity and by creating popular vehicles of mobilisation, including religious ones.

I understand a popular religion to be one which serves as a community expression of a group desire to achieve a religious satisfaction which is not forthcoming from a mainstream religion. Both Marx and Weber emphasised how the 'contingent nature of the relationship between the content of an ideology and the social position of the group who are its "carriers"' is of fundamental importance in understanding the social role of the ideology'.⁴² What this suggests in relation to the hegemonial religions is that their leaders will be concerned with perpetuating and promulgating a version of religion which is also an ideology of *domination*, which aims to strengthen and bolster their own social and theological position.

Virtually every sub-Saharan African state has a fair number, sometimes a very great quantity, of religious faiths and sects, often characterised by a mixture of Islam, Christianity and indigenous religions; often orthodox Christian churches compete with Protestant fundamentalist and independent churches. Popular—usually Sufi—Islam competes with the orthodoxy championed by the *ulama*. Both sets of popular religions are alternative sources of orthodoxy because every religious believer contends that his or her religion is actually one in which their own conception of orthodoxy is paramount.

Popular religions are the ordinary person's way of cocking a snook at authority, Bayart contends.⁴³ Mbembe argues that 'the current explosion of religious revivalism in Africa is another ruse by the common man to create a counter-ideology and alternative political space in response to the totalitarian

ambitions of African dictators'.⁴⁴ Popular religion *may* be a potent and overt symbol of political opposition, yet this is not to claim that *all* popular religion is by definition politically oriented, a form of anti-establishment political mobilisation in a religious garb. Spiritual benefits are also important in understanding an individual's choice of religion. Nevertheless, what is often of most importance is how the state perceives the popular religion's aims. For example, as Fields notes,⁴⁵ the Watchtower sect in central Africa was regarded by the colonial authorities as a politically revolutionary movement masquerading as a religious group. Similarly, in the post-colonial era, orthodox Islam has done its best to dominate its Sufi rival because Sufism has often been a leading force in societal opposition to the status quo. The point is that the state in Africa may often have great trouble in trying to dominate popular religious sects, to ensure that they operate according to the official rules laid down in the context of the state's hegemonial politico-administrative framework.⁴⁶ Any apparently substantive manifestations of anti-regime opposition must be taken very seriously indeed. The ramifications of this are clear: regimes must do all they can to reduce challenges to a minimum; one effective way is to bring real or imagined dissidents into the state nexus. If this is not possible, they must be neutralised.

As already argued, religion is a force which may have significant political implications for both ruler and ruled alike. Within Christianity there is a multiplicity of conceptions concealed behind an often spurious religious unity which, for example, may seek to establish the efficacy of liberation theology among all Third World Catholics regardless of differences in culture, tradition, history and political structures. Within every supposedly universal religion there is a multiformity of forms of religious belief which correspond to the class or stratum which is in focus. There is, for example, a 'Catholicism of the *petit bourgeoisie* and of city workers, a women's Catholicism, an intellectual's Catholicism equally varied and disconnected'.⁴⁷ This is not to argue that there is one religious orthodoxy which somehow mutates according to social or class context, but rather that there are many different 'Catholicisms', of which the hegemonial, orthodox version is but one. The same goes for Protestantism, which does not even claim to have the same uniformity as Catholicism. Within Islam there are at least four separate conceptions of the faith which correspond to sociocultural contexts: there is the culturally dominant, strongly patrimonial Islam of northern Nigeria, northern Chad and northern Cameroon. This is an Islam inextricably linked to notions of social hierarchy and political power; second, there is the Sufi Islam of the marabouts, which itself is divided into 'pure' and 'corrupt' forms.⁴⁸ In addition, there is the Islam of the discrete ethnic groups, which carries with it much cultural and racial baggage; and, there is the fundamentalist Islam of the radical higher education student (who may wish to recreate Iran's theological perfections). These categories by no means exhaust all the extant types of popular religious belief, but the point has been made: popular religion, in all its manifestations, relates to the perceptions, ethics and conventions of various groups divided by occupation, class or gender, and expressed through religious terminology.

In Africa, reflecting an often bleakly unpromising economic and political reality, popular religions often express themselves in the apparent hopelessness,

the lack of expectations of the mass of the people, where religious faith is regarded as the key to worldly material favour:

Africa at prayer looks for a miracle, it is a daily appeal for the ultimate solution to illness, poverty, and misery. That is Africa of the night, of Saturdays and Sundays. Africa of the week and of the day 'manages', and corrupt and corrupting individuals die between the two worlds, struggling to survive.⁴⁹

Popular religion is basically materialist, quite distinct from the more idealistic speculations of Weber's 'genteel intellectuals'.⁵⁰ A materialist conception of popular religion relates to particular forms of ordering and organising religious communities. Fundamentalist sects challenge the orthodox religions both intellectually and materially. Such is the concern with the haemorrhaging of followers, that the mainstream Christian churches make two lines of attack. On the one hand, the fundamentalist churches are accused of being little (if anything) more than US Trojan horses, while at the same time the orthodox churches rush to incorporate evangelical elements (glossolalia, faith healing, copious biblical allusions) into their services.⁵¹ The fact that millions of Africans—in common with many others in Latin America, East Asia and the Pacific Rim—have converted to fundamentalist Christianity over the last decade or so suggests strongly that such people find something in the 'born again' sects which they do not in the mainstream churches. At the same time, the dominance of some fundamentalist churches by wealthy foreign (especially North American) pastors, helps to confirm the association between their religion and personal prosperity: they offer a vision of Western consumerist success which serves as a powerful inducement for less materially successful people over and above the spiritual benefits many people gain.

Despite leaders' claims of political indifference, the political significance of the 'born again' Christian churches is manifested in a number of ways. Followers often have no problem in endorsing their (US or westernised) leaders' aversion to socialism. Quite apart from the fact that to many socialism defines itself as a negation of the very existence of God, further distrust is born of a first-hand experience with various types of 'African socialism' which for many people is associated with bureaucratisation, elitist power concentration, waste and ideological inflexibility.

To the fundamentalist Christian, religion is concerned with social issues in the context of the creation of a counter-culture involving a communal sharing of fears, ills, jobs, hopes and material success. Earthly misfortune is a result of lack of faith; God will reward true believers. Adherents believe that people's redemption is in their own hands (or rather in both God's and the individual's hands), and that expectations that government could or should supply all or even most of people's needs and deal with their problems is misplaced. African fundamentalist Christians do not usually seek to form political vehicles for their social and economic aspirations; they believe in the biblical idea that political leaders should rule, senior religious figures should stick to spiritual matters. What this implies is that followers do not ordinarily involve themselves in the cut and thrust of political competition; it does not mean that when a clearly political issue arises with significant connotations for the fundamentalist

Christian community they will remain silent. For example, 'born again' Christians in Nigeria have become a significant political voice over the issue of perceived islamisation of the country.

Contrary to some accounts, however, it should not be assumed that such people will necessarily be strong democrats. Huntington quotes approvingly projected figures of Christianity's growth in Africa from some 236 million believers in 1985 to 400 million in the early 21st century.⁵² He appears to assume that this will necessarily be instrumental in forcing demands for further democratisation onto the political agenda, as he argues correctly that virtually all extant democracies are also Christian countries. Another interpretation, however, is that many of these Christians will be followers of apolitical or politically conservative sects with either no interest in democracy *per se*, or will be believers in 'strong', i.e. authoritarian, earthly government, who will be difficult to rouse to political voice except when their religion seems under attack.

Fundamentalist Islamic groups are rare in sub-Saharan Africa. Popular Muslim groups seek to follow their own Islamic orthodoxies which almost invariably will run counter to the purist, reforming versions of Islam forwarded by the often arabicised elites of the *ulama*. Running contrary to the purist trend are the desires of ordinary Muslims, who are confronted in their religion both by the demands of the modern nation-state for national unity as well as by pressure from the Muslim elite to follow the 'true' Muslim path of orthodoxy. Unlike popular Christian sects, popular Muslim groups, especially in urban areas, often function as *de facto* conduits of opposition and of anti-regime solidarity. This underlines how the state and the *ulama* do not have the monopoly of religio-social organisation between them. As Fossaert notes:

men-in-society (sic) are organized in and by the state, but they are also organized in families, in village communities, in provinces, in workplaces, in factories in which the state is not always the proprietor, in trade unions, in parties and in associations and in other ways which the state does not necessarily control.⁵³

Fossaert fails to mention religious organisations of popular focus, but at that level, Islam is an important expression of community; at local level it is an 'anti-structure' expressing what Turner refers to as 'the powers of the weak';⁵⁴ in its own way, it is a counter-society. In urban surroundings, manifestations of Muslim community, often outside the state's control, include Muslim associations (such as the Hamadiyya Shadhiliyya of urban Egypt), Sufi brotherhoods and community mosques. The basic framework of worship in Islam—small groups of men meeting to pray five times a day and to study the Quran together in the central mosque on Fridays—mitigates factionalism, at least at the community level.

Islamic observances, such as Friday prayers, the annual fast (Ramadan), and the hajj, are public manifestations of faith which are part and parcel of Muslim community life. Membership of Sufi brotherhoods in Africa adds a contextualising cultural dimension to the universal religious solidarities: Sufi traditions are of mystic routes to communion with God, involving religion-derived song and dance meetings and the worship of local Muslim saints. The Sufi brotherhoods provide an additional source of identity in towns and cities, while the

Muslim obligation to provide *zakat* (alms) is a fruitful source of patron-client relationships.⁵⁵

What this amounts to is that Muslim civil society is not the product of universalising Muslim cultural currents. In sub-Saharan Africa, conceptions of Islam are moulded by many cultural situations which serve to adapt the claimed orthodoxies of the arabist conception of Islam for local use. It is the political potentialities which popular Islamic organisations carry that makes the state both suspicious and wary of them. The state seeks to dislocate Islamic resentment by controlling and defusing it. The state 'must "put its nose" into the life of the Muslim community' where Islam is the ideological referent; yet, it has by and large been quite unsuccessful in mobilising communities of Muslims by way of a secular discourse around national unity issues.⁵⁶

Popular Islamic modes may be subversive to the interests of both religious and political elites. Three types are important: women's groups, millenarian sects and ethnoreligious vehicles of opposition which use Islam as their *leitmotif*. First, there is the Islam of the associations of Muslim women, which are sometimes described as 'apolitical' in orientation.⁵⁷ However, such organisations, which focus their activities on a number of concerns including practical help for Muslim females or a wider orientation to change the position of women in Islam, often aim to help poor females, to spread modern education among girls, or to advance the position of women generally in Muslim society. Such objectives are actually highly political at the level of gender politics, working as they do towards forms of women's liberation. Growing numbers of female Muslims find employment in the modern sector—as, for example, teachers and secretaries—as a direct result of the spread of education. Second, there are the millenarian sects, such as that associated with the Cameroonian, Muhammad Murwa, in Kano in the late 1970s. Third, there are ethnoreligious groups which utilise Islam as a cultural referent to focus community anger at perceived political and economic marginalisation.⁵⁸ Examples include Balukta in Tanzania and the Islamic Party of Kenya.

Conclusion

The politics of the secularisation of society, ie the determination of rulers to mobilise the people in 'mass' parties, has been largely unsuccessful in the aim of subjugating autonomous forms of collective life to state control. In many urban settings there is a sense of Muslim community that offers a welcome structure of solidarity and serves to replace networks of social solidarity which before urbanisation were based on kinship structures and on clan and age groups. Thus, the essence of modern Muslim community in urban surroundings is to come to terms with the effects of modernisation on social structures. Popular religious organisations more generally offer important ways of affirming the autonomy and identity of a religious or ethnoreligious community in the urban centres, the city. Muslim community organisations, rather like Christian fundamentalist churches, serve to 'rescue' those who are 'drifting' in the urban milieu, including those who come to the urban centre for economic betterment

but instead find themselves cut off from family and community. For them, religious-community organisations offer an alternative 'family'.⁵⁹

Popular religion reflects the power of ordinary people to take charge of their own spiritual wellbeing. It is quite different in both conception and form to the religious orthodoxies which the leaders of the hegemonial religions propound. To speak of theology, Islam, Christianity, or the church in the singular is to fail to appreciate that such concepts only have meaning in the class context within which they are viewed. Religious unity is a chimera. Religious 'universality' in fact masks diversity, a result of the stratification of social classes and groups. Clerics' theology is the official philosophy of their religion; yet it transmogrifies into a number of forms which pertain to the level of life at which the recipient of the ideas exists. 'Popular religion,' ie religion as it is lived, is thus quite different from that of the professional articulators of the religion's philosophy.

Popular religion offers solidarity at a time of social upheaval and crisis which helps to fulfill people's spiritual and material needs. By threatening existing cultural identities modernisation—that multifaceted process involving urbanisation, centralisation of government and the insertion of national economies into the world economy—helps to stimulate their resurgence in various forms. To Weiner, religion in Third World contexts 'demonstrates the powerful attraction of transcendental sentiments as an ordering element in human relations and as a way of explaining collective misfortunes'.⁶⁰ Perhaps this is how modernisation is most commonly perceived by ordinary people in sub-Saharan Africa: as a period of massive misfortune. Popular religion, seen in this way, is a means of attempting to come to terms with such changes, to offer hope of material improvement in the future by the application of spiritual effort. The relation of the religious hegemons to state power is also reflective of the effects of modernisation, in the way that both political and religious power is closely tied to the wielding of material resources.

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1996 - Volume 1 (3 issues). ISSN 1356-3467.

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Reinvention of an African patrimonial state: Charles Taylor's Liberia

WILLIAM RENO

We seek ... credible democratic elections, and the establishment of a unified government based upon respect for human rights, democratic principles, and economic accountability.

Assistant Secretary of State, George Moose on US policy on Liberia delivered before House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, 18 May 1994

Ghankay [Charles Taylor] is our law. He understands that the man with the gun is a strong man.

Interview with National Patriotic Front of Liberia official, Lofa County, 'Greater Liberia'

These two quotes highlight a contrast between the way many reformers expect power to be exercised in Liberia and the actual exercise of power. The former expects bureaucratic institutions, territorial fixity and an administration that recognises the interests of citizens. The heir to this vision, the Monrovia enclave, occupies the capital city and environs under foreign military protection. The latter quote typifies the methods of Charles Taylor, a man who styled himself president of 'Greater Liberia' until rivals from within his National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) challenged him in September 1994. Taylor dispensed with most forms of administration that observers elsewhere see as vital components of 'stateness'. His rule rested firmly upon coercion. NPFL boundaries continue to shift. Despite this, its resources and control attract the attentions of foreign firms, which have provided Taylor with money and weapons.

Does this transformed patrimonialism represent a new kind of state, an alternative institutionalisation of sovereign authority capable of defending itself and doing things without significant bureaucracies? The 'Greater Liberia' case indicates that, where others see marginalisation and unsustainability for patrimonial regimes, rulers in fact develop new techniques to draw in political and economic resources. Rather than representing what one author terms a 'pathology of state decay',¹ these men govern in ways compatible with rule through more exclusively non-bureaucratic elite networks, and with scant regard for conventional institutional notions of state power based upon maximising power through expanded bureaucratic capacity and administrative autonomy.² This paper looks beyond state decay to a simultaneous non-bureaucratic process of state building, an alternative institutionalisation of political authority heavily dependent upon external resources for survival.

Incorporating 'reform' into crisis management

The sociologist Emmanuel Terray likened this dichotomy to the air-conditioner and the veranda. Africa of the air-conditioner, he says, consists of 'Presidents.

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Ministers, Parliaments, Administration, Parties, Constitutions, Laws, Rules, an airport with a VIP lounge, companies of paratroopers ... motorcycle outriders with sirens ...³ The latter's role in maintaining internal order and managing external relations is not insignificant. But the main point of the bureaucratic manifestation is show—a presentation confirming the country's hold on a position in international society, colonial borders and all. Likewise, the display stakes a claim on supremacy over alternate internal centres of power.

Alongside the air-conditioner, says Terray, is 'Africa of the veranda', governed not with regard to efficiency, but to the share-out.⁴ In Zaire, for example, the same man runs both systems, through what Bayart calls a 'reciprocal assimilation of elites'.⁵ That is to say, the veranda provides pay-offs to a range of constituencies—ethnic, generational, communal, commercial—familiar to students of patrimonialism, and these groups in turn support and act in the rulers' interests.

Critics of patrimonialism, however, have long held that the logic of the veranda alone cannot provide prerequisites of statehood: the collection of revenues, exercise of uniform control over territory, guarantee that commands are obeyed and provision a measure of stability and predictability supportive of long-term economic growth. Amidst growing scarcity, clients have become too expensive, drawing resources away from indispensable tasks such as acquiring revenue to pay troops who protect the regime. The end of the Cold War is supposed to spell the end of what Jackson calls 'negative sovereignty', as external support is withdrawn from rulers who will now suffer the fatal consequences of their weak and misguided rule if they continue to buy political support through pay-offs to clients.⁶ Rulers and creditors can agree that 'efficiency', defined as more state control over the distribution of resources, is a worthy goal. Critics accept that variations in the Africa of the air-conditioner are possible, especially where dependent elites are likely to resist a cut-off of pay-outs.

Côte d'Ivoire's Houphuet-Boigny, for example, concluded that effective bureaucracies were the creations of foreigners, and were best left to foreigners to run. But his strategy retained the central role of state institutionalisation through building bureaucratic capacity, at least, as Terray notes, to convey an impression to sceptical populations and increasingly demanding foreign backers.

The end of the Cold War, however, is said to be forcing African rulers to rebuild effective bureaucracies.⁷ A recent volume examining the interplay of external resources and internal politics depicts patrimonial rulers as increasingly 'hemmed in', forced to rely on the Africa of the air-conditioner to retain access to vital external resources and political support.⁸ Creditors insist on a bureaucracy-boosting strategy of 'capacity building' in return for leniency on (over)due loans and as a condition for future loans. Creditors and others press a 'governance' agenda featuring regular elections and mechanisms to force rulers to heed the interests of members of society who support economic efficiency and government accountability. These reforms are designed to end the rent-seeking behaviour of state officials who are blamed for the political logic of the veranda that has done such damage to bureaucracies and economic development.

Yet rulers like Taylor still pursue the logic of the veranda. Though

unquestionably 'hemmed in' by bad economies and a less supportive international environment, quite a few incumbent rulers manipulate political openings to manage elite demands. Jennifer Widner notes that some rulers presiding over centralised patron-client networks coordinate rapid political openings and subsequent public condemnation of unwarranted privilege to coopt powerful rivals who could threaten their tenure and their standing among foreign backers.⁹ Political opening takes its place alongside non-merit appointments, periodic corruption investigations and rotations of office as a means of disciplining and weakening potential rivals. Paradoxically, authoritarian leaders may systematically weaken state agencies where costly clients reside to assert their own authority through a purposeful and rational debureaucratisation. The ruler is caught in a delicate game of restraining powerful elites who hold state office to limit their political power, while at the same time allowing sufficient organisation to perform tasks necessary for regime survival.

Viewed in this light, popular demands for democratic ideas and external pressures to allow political openings are variables that may influence rulers' reshaping of patrimonial government. 'Effective governance', however, is defined in many State Houses in terms of physical domination rather than as preconceived notions of 'effective political exchange relations with societal interests'.¹⁰ The difficulty of placing participants of this political struggle in standard state-society categories demonstrates the encompassing nature of the effort to reassert control. Which of Liberia's many armed groups represents state power or societal resistance? Further afield, are Mozambique's RENAMO or Angola's UNITA leaders state or societal actors? How does one define powerful state officials who use their positions for personal and communal enrichment? Indeed, giving one's rivals the political space of a 'civil society' may prove fatal.

This exploration of intensified veranda strategies also sheds light on the role of violence in the state restructuring process. Surprisingly, violence has been little studied in this regard.¹¹ Where violence does attract attention, it is often regarded as evidence of chaos, of divorce from 'normal' state behaviour and the consequence of bad policies. But violence and power are inseparable in the non-bureaucratic state. An alternative project emerges to supplant the weak bureaucratic state with a state more capable of acting directly upon its subjects. In colonial times, the ideology of control through force, of *mise en valeur*, took the place of the absent consent between ruler and ruled and a colonial aversion to costly administration. Like their colonial predecessors, more than a few rulers in Africa view commercial intrusion and force as a way to absorb 'disengaged peasants' and tie strongmen to their favour in return for profit. As colonial rulers wrote of *Afrique utile*, or 'putting the natives to work', or used tax policy as a way to force subjects into state-defined networks, Charles Taylor advertised his organisation's motto as 'Liberty*Justice*Discipline*Work'. Not to be confused with developmentalist urges, the continuity here lies in the connection between domination of societal networks, accumulation and power.

Taylor's 'Greater Liberia' demonstrates this pronounced strengthening of the logic of the veranda. Those like Taylor use external commercial networks as tools to control internal networks, and to discipline and play external supporters off one another. This they do to garner resources to expand their realms in ways

that would not have been feasible in the Cold War era's material support for the custodians of the Africa of the air-conditioner. External actors, particularly foreign commercial networks, also link patrimonial rulers with non-African states and economies. Yes, rulers continue to rely upon existing alliances with local strongmen whom they allow to exploit local economic opportunities. Yet greater reliance on foreign firms and intermediaries represents a significant departure from patrimonial dependence on decaying state institutions for political resources.

This political accommodation with foreigners allows 'veranda rulers' to forego building strong bureaucratic institutions. In some instances, rulers then loot the assets of their own state's bureaucracies and destroy them to deny a base of support to potential or real political rivals. Indispensable tasks such as revenue collection and control of unruly populations are pursued with the assistance of foreign firms and experts interested in exploiting local opportunities, joining an accommodation with rulers that formerly had been more uniformly African in composition. Paradoxically, marginalisation of the 'air-conditioner state' prompts rulers to apply veranda strategies to outsiders. This development also suggests that the organic state-society discordance that is the focus of the 'governance' school of reform is in fact bounded within a more encompassing elite control that includes overseas people and organisations. The logic of the veranda diverges starkly from prescriptions holding that state power is achievable only through strong, autonomous bureaucracies. On the contrary, to attract some foreign collaborators, rulers may convince prospective partners that they can profit from non-enforcement of regulations and benefit from private uses of state power.

This transformed patrimonial logic—the breakdown of legal and territorial boundaries of African states and the changing role of 'private' commercial networks—shows us a 'hemmed in' ruler who manages his crisis of authority with unexpectedly diverse strategies. The case demonstrates that the patrimonial logic of the veranda, far from receding, plays a central role in this process of transformation. This and similar cases elsewhere in Africa support concluding observations regarding the increasingly apparent transience of the logic of the air-conditioner. Those like Taylor that the media call 'warlords' reserve a special role for violence, reproducing aspects of the logic of the veranda. Their methods are situated in a *longue durée* that resumes many of the strategies of late pre-colonial and colonial rule in parts of Africa.

'Greater Liberia'—a state of commercial networks

As head of the NPFL, Charles Taylor launched a Christmas Eve invasion of Liberia in 1989. Since then, the forces he created have controlled significant portions of Old Liberia and at times, the eastern periphery of Sierra Leone. At his zenith in 1992, Taylor, a fugitive from Boston, MA's Plymouth Corrections Institute,¹² claimed most of Liberia, parts of Guinea and about a quarter of Sierra Leone as 'Greater Liberia' from his base at the provincial centre of Gbarnga. Taylor's case illuminates key features of how a patrimonial ruler expands his

authority beyond recognised borders and commands force to counter external threats without recourse to bureaucratic institutionalisation of his rule.

Taylor's territory boasts its own currency and banking system, television and radio network, airfields and, until 1993, a deepwater port. Taylor's associates still preside over an export trade in diamonds, timber, gold and agricultural products.¹³ Taylor pioneered a network of foreign firms to exploit and market these resources, to finance military conquests and to control economically useful territory. Meanwhile, the writ of the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) and its 1994 successor, the Liberian National Transition Government (LNTG) remains limited to the Monrovia area, and this only with the backing of a multinational military force of African troops under United Nations command.

Taylor found that the absence of internationally recognised sovereignty also removed constraints on collection and use of revenues that creditors demand of debtor states. The LNTG enclave, for example, faces legal entanglements and creditor demands arising from unpaid arrears on an inherited \$4 billion debt. Ironically, Taylor's freedom from creditors and his access to foreign firms put him in a better position to generate foreign exchange quickly than the Monrovia enclave, with its international recognition. Consequently, Taylor was able to finance control of his political networks through almost entirely non-institutional channels.

The force of Taylor's political authority lay in his ability to manipulate foreign firms to secure foreign exchange, weapons and political support and to use them as tools to manage various internal conflicts in his favour. A bureaucratic strategy of state-building was rendered difficult, since 'Greater Liberia' inherited an already decrepit bureaucracy. Warfare drove most old regime officials out of areas under Taylor's control by mid 1990. From the conception of his regime, Taylor and his allies have used force to ensure loyalty and obedience to decisions and to control resources of interest to foreign firms. Lack of international recognition, the intervention of foreign soldiers and the need to raise money quickly to pay for weapons reinforced Taylor's preoccupation with establishing unhindered personal control as the basis of his rule.

Taylor retained Swindler & Berlin, a United States public relations firm representing the Liberian Mining Corporation, to represent his 'movement'.¹⁴ He has claimed 'warm ties' to former US president Jimmy Carter and cites what he alleged was Carter's support for his NPFL after Carter voiced criticism of foreign troops during a visit to Liberia.¹⁵ Taylor's displays of authority changed as the 'Liberia of the air-conditioner' became more marginal in the post-Cold War balance of power. Taylor the rebel leader and those like him do not seek or need immediate formal recognition as members of international society. They do need intermediaries who can be used to help exploit resources and gain access to international commercial networks. Taylor's associations were intended to create an impression among internal rivals and potential rivals. He publicised his actions through *The Patriot*, his 'official' newspaper of high technical quality, possibly produced with the help of foreign associates. Tee-shirts and placards with pictures of Carter and Taylor and the words 'Ghankay is OK' conveyed Taylor's associations to common people and aspiring individuals. He

communicated with publicists, overseas associates and representatives through a facsimile and satellite telephone hook-up.¹⁶

Taylor began financing his operations with the plunder and sale of mining machinery from the abandoned German-operated Bong Iron Ore Company. Charles' brother Gbata Taylor directed sales of this machinery overseas and used this income as the nucleus of the NPFL's 'official' financial agency for dealing with overseas associates, the Bong Bank.¹⁷ Charles Taylor then discovered the profits and political benefits of cooperation with Firestone Tire and Rubber. The manager of Firestone's plantation, long central to Liberia's export orientated economy, allegedly reached an accord with Taylor in 1991 to cooperate in rubber production and marketing. Taylor is accused of using his 'G-2' security force to help organise rubber workers.¹⁸ In return, Firestone allegedly provided communications facilities and a supply base for 'Operation Octopus', the NPFL's October 1992 attack on Monrovia.¹⁹

Taylor and his successors also swap timber for arms, continuing a practice of Liberia's former President Doe.²⁰ Taylor channeled sales through a 'Forestry Development Authority' linked to his brother's Bong Bank to collect cash for timber licenses and to tax rough log exports.²¹ This trade attracts French firms and Lebanese-owned enterprises in neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire,²² such that 'Greater Liberia' was France's third largest source of tropical timber in 1991.²³ This access to foreign exchange left Taylor free to take advantage of good prices from arms vendors peddling cheap weapons in the wake of post-Cold War disarmament. The timber trade also provided Taylor with an instrument to absorb elements of the old Americo-Liberian elite network based in Monrovia and along the coast. Collaborating timber operations, Hawk Logging and International Timber Incorporated, for example, allegedly include members of politically eminent Monrovia families. Taylor's absorption of these networks, which had collaborated with the Doe government in the 1980s, ensured that anti-NPFL coalitions would be weaker and more divided than would otherwise be the case.

Taylor's best prospect for financing and protecting his NPFL briefly centred on a planned joint venture astride the Liberia-Guinea border. Nimba Mining Company (NIMCO), a consortium of North American, European and Japanese mining firms, made plans to dig iron ore in Liberia's Nimba County in 1989.²⁴ More interesting, however, was NIMCO's member firms' willingness to deal directly with Taylor's NPFL. The Liberian American Swedish Minerals Company (LAMCO) was to provide management services to the Liberian Mining Corporation, and the firm employs the same representation as Taylor in Washington, DC. LAMCO's local general manager allegedly returned to 'Greater Liberia' to oversee the consortium's interests.²⁵ Gencor Corporation, a South African firm, has become the latest to join the project, slated to cost about half a billion dollars.²⁶ Independence day greetings bearing some joint venture participants' names appear in Taylor's *Patriot* newspaper.²⁷

In turn, Taylor used NIMCO interest in territory he controlled to raise money and limit external interference in his affairs. British-owned NIMCO partner African Mining Company of Liberia (AMCL) handled iron ore shipments in NPFL territory to keep a railroad to Buchanan open when Taylor controlled that port

city until 1993. In return for NPFL iron ore and cooperation, consortium participants allegedly paid Taylor \$10 million a month.²⁸ Sollac, a French supplier of iron ore to French state-owned Usinor steel mills allegedly purchased ore shipments from Taylor in 1991.²⁹ This foreign firm presence complicated the Monrovia enclave's struggle to cut off Taylor's financial and arms networks since commercial benefits from Taylor's operations undermined foreign government opposition to the NPFL. For example, Taylor exploited concerns in Paris that Nigeria's role in ECOMOG, a multilateral military force represented Nigerian interference in areas of historic French commercial dominance.³⁰ French failure to back United Nations criticism of the environmental consequences of the NIMCO project signalled French commercial interests' strength in resisting IGNU efforts to scupper Taylor's business deals.³¹

Within this framework of rivalry, Taylor exploited external networks to protect and extend his commercial contacts. To this end, Taylor allegedly subcontracted Buchanan's port operations and customs collections to the Associated Development Corporation (ADC), a private operation, 'because of its expected infusion of investment capital'.³² ADC provided little capital. More importantly, however, the firm attracted United States and Lebanese middlemen interested in Taylor's agricultural products and timber. In this case, overseas business networks brought contact with several other foreign firms that could find more markets for 'Greater Liberian' products. Taylor's ties to Lebanese families with business between Buchanan and Côte d'Ivoire also suggests that Ivoirian state officials shared in the profits of Taylor's operations.

The perceptions of officials in other states that their rivals are gaining influence in Liberia allow Taylor and those like him to translate these commercial operations into informal diplomatic leverage. US diplomatic cables leaked to the press highlighted the aggressive military tactics of a large Nigerian contingent's operations against Taylor. This in turn made more plausible Taylor's claims to domestic and foreign audiences that Nigerian forces are actually foreign invaders bent on occupying Liberia. Meanwhile, despite State Department knowledge that Taylor stockpiled weapons, US officials' unwillingness to do anything about these leaks made clear to Taylor that the USA was reluctant to intervene in Liberia to back the rival Monrovia government directly.³³

France's foreign policy establishment saw the Nigerian intervention in the light of Nigerian claims on disputed territory with Cameroon in the French sphere of influence. By extension, Nigerian military dominance of the multinational operation in Liberia, and suspicions that Nigerian forces sell weapons and provide logistical support to anti-NPFL combatants,³⁴ led French policy makers to see possibilities for advancing their interests through covert assistance to Taylor's forces.³⁵ The government of 'Greater Liberia's' pro-French neighbour, Côte d'Ivoire, shares French concern over the Nigerian presence in the military campaign against Taylor. Côte d'Ivoire's leaders thus tolerated shipments of arms to Taylor from former Warsaw Pact countries via his and Burkina Faso's territory.³⁶

These private commercial arrangements and informal contacts with other states bolstered Taylor's capacity to exercise political authority. Taylor used access to foreign exchange and weapons to help underwrite a rebel invasion and

occupation of eastern Sierra Leone. Naming former Sierra Leone Army Corporal Foday Sankoh to the office of 'Governor of Sierra Leone', Taylor incorporated conquered territories into his alternative state's commercial network.³⁷ In 1991 and 1992 the most economically viable parts of Sierra Leone—the diamond fields and export agricultural lands—briefly became part of the NPFL-associated commercial empire.³⁸ This fluidity of NPFL territorial control still provides a means of rewarding fighters. Since NPFL fighters are not paid, they are promised opportunities to loot conquered areas. Taylor's use of force against the Sierra Leonean regime in turn created in Freetown a more urgent need for revenue and weapons that hastened the abandonment of costly bureaucratic efforts there in an effort to meet the immediate threat of the invasion.

More recently, Taylor has incorporated other networks into his pursuit of resources and political influence. For example, an armed group in northwest Liberia called the Lofa Defence Force has collaborated with Taylor's organisation and its Sierra Leonean associates in combat against anti-NPFL forces in the area. In return, the group's head and his gunmen share in the proceeds of trade in captured diamond and agricultural booty. In this way, Taylor has tied some ethnic Kissi interests to his own as they used association with Taylor as a means to defend themselves against (anti-Taylor) Mandingo ethnic and commercial rivals.

These developments highlight the limited analytical utility of notions of state-society dichotomies or expectations of state autonomy necessary for the creation of predictable, efficient bureaucracies. Taylor instead uses commercial networks to deal with difficulties that arise from the absence of a definable and defensible 'state interest' and manipulates conflicts among them to shape internal social relationships. Foreign firms and African military subcontractors discipline subjects and force down the cost of exploitation, and accumulate wealth to pay for expansion. This monopoly of opportunity attracts enterprising individuals. Where it is dominant, those concerned about preserving their own privilege are obliged to join forces with this network, or at least pay protection to it.

This connection between domination of societal networks, accumulation and power makes nonsense of efforts to mark firm distinctions between state and society. Likewise, it is difficult to imagine Taylor's foes as agents of societal resistance and *revanche*. In what category should one place the misleadingly named Liberian Peace Council (LPC), for example? This armed group active in the Buchanan area currently poses the most serious military threat to NPFL forces. The LPC's head, George Boley, once served as a minister in the Doe government in the 1980s.³⁹ Boley then joined the United Liberation Movement for Democracy (ULIMO) to contest areas in the west under Taylor's control. Striking out on his own as head of the LPC, Boley presides over alleged instances of forced labour in copper mining operations and a logging trade enjoying protection from Nigerian military forces stationed in the area.⁴⁰ Like Taylor's operations, this case of extreme patrimonialism shows signs of greater flexibility and adaptation once unbound from the 'Africa of the air-conditioner'.

Boley's successful break with Taylor highlights the limits of this alternative state-building strategy, however. Where political alliances revolve almost exclusively around economic gain, enterprising associates shift allegiances at any sign

of superior opportunity in some other alliance. They may seize opportunities for themselves during momentary weakness or inattention on the part of the leader. Taylor's brand of intense patrimonialism, imperfectly enforced, may prove especially vulnerable to further fragmentation. At the same time, this threat may also motivate those like Taylor to rely even more on outright coercion over subjects and exclusive control over resources as a defensive tactic. In the end, it is these potential and real rivals, those most likely to organise within the bureaucracies of an 'air-conditioner state', who preoccupy leaders like Taylor. Taylor was 'hemmed in', but he dealt with threats to his rule from within this patrimonial milieu.

Violence and the transformation of patrimonialism

To be sure, elites engage in predatory behaviour that destroys legitimacy and bureaucratic institutions which could otherwise mobilise populations. These elites are also logically avoided. But fixations on the collapse of 'Africa of the air-conditioner' misses the connection between power and accumulation in the non-bureaucratic ('non-state') realm. It also misses the international dimensions—commercial networks, cross-border collaborations—that sustain this transformation.

Elites in both cases use these resources to compensate for difficulties encountered in achieving autonomy, bureaucratic control and loss of some sources of external support through intensified exploitation of those under their control. They combine exploitation with a deliberate strategy of extroversion, designed to attract further outside help in mobilising people and resources, gaining access to markets and, in turn, access to foreign exchange to buy more weapons to control more territory, people, and so forth.

This situation demonstrates many similarities to Goody's description of pre-colonial chiefs along Africa's west coast.⁴¹ Foreigners still serve as intermediaries for dependent rentiers who control resources and people. Foreign assistance enables the chief to join together elements of a pared down elite alliance and manipulate subordinate groups through controlled access to economic opportunity in exchange for loyalty. Violence, however, plays an important role that was not as visible in post-colonial patrimonialism. Violence is employed in the service of accumulation, since the ruler can no longer hope to afford to invest in as wide an array of social networks as during the independence period.

The role of violence also recalls colonial notions of *mise en valeur*, or pacification and financing through the agency of concessionaire companies which lack their own political base within the country. Foreigners aid the ruler's effort to redefine social relations and reorder conflict in a manner more supportive of his authority. As those in power try new strategies to control social networks, the definition of 'the state' also shifts to encompass new methods of coercion, surveillance and discipline.

This transforming state is built from within society. Note the difficulty in determining who is the oppressor, who resists in 'Greater Liberia'. Renewed patrimonialism without the veneer of the 'air-conditioner' relies more heavily upon affiliations of parentage, ethnicity, confession and client networks of

various sorts to shape access to privilege, status and wealth. This englobement of society also points to the difficulty of settling conflict in these areas through political negotiation, since none of the 'movements' discussed in this paper have political platforms or demands, *per se*. Negotiation becomes a zero-sum game as leaders perceive concessions in terms of commercial loss rather than political compromise. This feature of networks no doubt has a role in seemingly bizarre shifts in collaborations, as for example, between ULIMO elements that collaborated with Taylor's NPFL on some fronts while battling Taylor on others.

Is this strategy of what the media call the 'warlord' unique to Africa? No doubt the failure of post-colonial states to develop legitimacy and institutionalised bureaucracies weighs heavily in the transformation that the end of the Cold War has accelerated. It is conceivable, however, that rulers could adapt this strategy of paring and externalising patrimonialism to cooperation with creditors. Creditor preferences for leader 'autonomy' over corrupt bureaucracies and anxiety about payments on debt obligations could be interpreted internally as an opportunity to establish more direct personal control. A recent World Bank report on Ghana, for example, notes that 'East Asia demonstrates what can be achieved with a combination of pragmatic and sensible government policies and a disciplined and hard-working population'.⁴² A ruler is then offered a means of accumulation under more certain political control and proceeds to dismantle bureaucracies harbouring rivals, under the guise of rooting out corruption and balancing budgets.

The hard-pressed ruler is likely to concur with creditors that his part of Africa does not suffer from over-exploitation, but instead from under-exploitation. A basis is then established for absorbing foreign firms and creditor concerns about accumulation and control of cut-off clients into a new elite alliance, albeit one likely to find more constraints on behaviour than Taylor's. The African ruler, the foreign firm and the creditor agree, though for different reasons, that the issue for immediate attention is accumulation.

It remains to be seen whether this transformation of patrimonialism represents state 'dysfunction' or is an alternative means of institutionalising state control along lines that depart from a colonial interlude.⁴³ In any case, one should keep in mind that state-building elsewhere has included elements of the competitive struggle to control resources. Individual rulers have used direct coercion to mobilise resources and people in their fiefs to extend their power in Europe as well as in Africa. Leaders in the Ile de France, for example, did so more efficiently than the rulers of Provence. Thus 'the French' speak the tongue of the Ile de France rather than Provençal. What today's press might call 'warlords' mastered the conversion of economic resources and violence into political power. To its inhabitants, the expanding state appeared more as organised crime, says Tilly, but a state it became.⁴⁴

Likewise, Mohammad Farah Aidid of Somalia, a 'warlord' in the media, mobilises resources—including contributions from Somalis abroad and protection payments from aid organisations.⁴⁵ Aidid financed a war against the United Nations forces, for 'opposing and resisting the colonial policies of UNOSOM ... waging an unprovoked war on the Somali people and their interests, drafting a charter of its own, setting up regional councils and a judicial system

without the consent of the Somali people and their political leaders'.⁴⁶ Enormous differences exist, however, between the unleashing of violence in the absence of the air-conditioner state and the reinstitutionalisation of violence in a state capable of providing security to its people. But must a political entity provide security to its citizens in order to be a state, or is this simply a particular type of state that most wish to see develop?

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1995 - Volume 4 (3 issues). ISSN 0958-4935.

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Universalism, Eurocentrism, and ideological bias in development studies: from modernisation to neoliberalism

JOHN BROHMAN

In much of the development literature, neoliberalism is portrayed as an innovative new development strategy which was created to address the key contradictions of previously dominant development frameworks, such as the modernisation approach and other Keynesian models. Despite such claims, however, many of the most serious contradictions of modernisation theory seem to be reappearing in the neoliberal development framework. These shortcomings make neoliberalism susceptible to many of the same criticisms that have plagued modernisation theory and, eventually, contributed to its demise. This paper will concentrate on problems stemming from the common shortcomings between these two development frameworks.

Formal models and neglect of the contextuality of development

In order to understand and explain processes of development, we need to become more sensitive to the complexities of various development experiences and to forge more appropriate conceptual tools within development theory for interpreting such experiences. From the more traditional modernisation paradigm to the newer neoliberal framework, mainstream development theory has been almost entirely rooted in the historical and social experiences of a few Western industrialised societies. However, as Bruton notes: 'Knowledge about the development process in a particular environment at a particular time does not exist in transferable form, rather it is the product of the development process itself.'¹

An ongoing tension exists within development theory between the desire to formulate universally valid principles and formal models (based on a stylised version of the development history of the West) and the need to understand the great variety of actual experiences and potential alternatives for development in different societies. Given their Western social science background, many development theorists across a range of disciplines have been preconditioned to look for parallels between the development history of the West and contemporary development in non-Western societies; as a result, the actual development experiences of different societies have been simplified and distorted.² Because of this, many analyses have been conceptually incapable of addressing the root causes of critical development problems in these societies.

No formalistic development orthodoxy, whether that of economic

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liberalisation or state interventionism, can provide universal solutions to the problems of all societies at all times. Solutions to development problems must be found in the 'contextuality' of development as a product of particular historical processes.³ The context of development is constantly changing at a variety of scales over time and among societies, creating both new obstacles and new opportunities for variations in development. Because of this, it is difficult to draw conclusions from the development experiences of particular societies during particular periods and expect these findings to be valid for other cases. Strategies and theories of development must come to grips with the basic pluralisms of development (ie based in the dynamics of concrete social formations structured by class, ethnicity, gender, religion, language, etc) that produce important differences among societies across both time and space. Geographical and historical diversity at the global, national and local/regional scales needs to be recognised within development frameworks, especially those designed to contribute towards policy making. Such diversity is responsible for the tendency of particular development problems to concentrate in specific places at specific times. At the global scale, for example, particularities of development within each of the South's major regions have caused important variations in development problems (eg food shortages in Africa as a result of peasant exploitation and rural impoverishment, external indebtedness in Latin America because of excessive foreign dependency and exorbitant state spending).

The need to 'unlearn' our grand theories of development

In recent years analysts in a variety of disciplines have depicted both neoclassical theory⁴ and mainstream development studies⁵ as 'grand theories' characteristic of the Age of Enlightenment and 19th-century thought. Grand theories—whether neoclassical economics, orthodox Marxism, or Keynesianism—construct a totalising vision of society which attempts to provide a rational basis for understanding all aspects of development. Such theories, however, neglect much of the richness and diversity of development by reducing it to some fundamental essence. Postwar development studies, for example, have been largely dominated by the concept of modernisation—the equation of development with modernisation and the construction of a single model of modernity based on the experience of a few (industrialised) countries. If this model is followed, it is assumed that all countries may reach the goal of a similar type of 'modern society'. This type of grand theorisation is prone to problems of reductionist bias, whereby simplistic monocausal explanations are sought for complex development realities. Within such explanations there is little room for plurality; much of the richness and diversity of societies that produces different trajectories of development is excluded from analysis. By contrast, a relativist approach recognises social diversity and the particularities of place within the theorisation process. Relativism insists that human behaviour and development can only be understood within its proper context—there are no models or theoretical constructs that are universally applicable. A growing number of social theorists have recently adopted this position, rejecting tendencies towards

grand theorisation which are regarded as outdated and inapplicable to contemporary global conditions.

At a methodological level, a theory is largely determined by its underlying framework or presuppositions, and thus there exists a close connection between the framework, the theory and the subject and methods of research. It is a common observation of the post-Kuhnian philosophy of science that a theory allows researchers to study only the subject matter to which the theory directs them. A theory is determined by its own framework and, in turn, the theory interprets its subjects in accordance with its own logic. Alternatively, a different underlying framework will yield a different theory that will address different subjects using different methods. Accordingly, if the frameworks and theories that are commonly employed in development studies omit important elements of Third World development, we need to rethink our key concepts and theoretical discourses and engage in a process of theoretical renewal. In a recent review of contending theories of development,⁶ Davis asserts that the development field currently faces three broad challenges: first, to identify untenable concepts, categories, and theoretical propositions about Third World development; second, to trace the historical and ideological origins of these concepts and theoretical propositions; and, third, to 'unlearn' our preconceived notions and prevailing discourses that prevent us from understanding the complexities of development in various Third World areas. Our approach to development needs to foster a sensitivity to the local context rather than indiscriminately replicating ideas and models generated out of context. Development principles should not be formed via the direct transplanting of preconceived approaches; instead, they should be reconsidered in terms of particular sociocultural, political, economic and environmental conditions.

The importance of history and culture to economic growth

Given the prominence of economics within mainstream development theory, the generation of economic growth has usually been afforded a central place in development studies. For most neoclassical economists and related development theorists, the concept of economic growth is neither culture-specific nor is it based on historically changing conditions. Instead, economic growth is subject to its own universal laws irrespective of the sociocultural or historical contexts within which it occurs.⁷

Prescriptions for economic growth are derived from generalised hypotheses and are presumed to have universal applicability. Variations in historical or sociocultural circumstances are treated as 'noise' that should be filtered out to increase the parsimony of the development models. Culture and history, when they have been considered at all, have been regarded as barriers on the road that neoclassical development theorists sought to travel. Perhaps, as Somjee notes, a complex factor such as culture could have no place in the neoclassical 'search for order' in development because it would make accepted modelling techniques impossibly difficult.⁸ Or perhaps it would expose the irrelevance of such modelling techniques to many pressing development problems that are rooted in social and cultural variations. At any rate, economic growth and development

have been transformed in the neoclassical literature into 'scientific' concepts which are products of 'rational discourse' and are thus universal in scope and not limited by particular historical or cultural conditions.

However, no universally valid strategies for generating either economic growth or development have yet been found. The variety of development experiences in different regions and countries cannot be understood via the neoclassical paradigm or, for that matter, any other simple mechanistic framework. Different strategies need to be conceived for different countries and different time periods. To a large extent, development is contextually defined; it is an open-ended concept that should be constantly redefined as our knowledge of the development process deepens and as new problems of development appear. At its best, development theory has been interdisciplinary and has moved away from dependence on any of the excessively specialised and static social sciences to examine interrelationships among sociocultural, political, economic and environmental factors within particular geographical and historical contexts. In order to address this complex subject matter, a range of theoretical constructs and methodological techniques from the social sciences and humanities needs to be employed and, if necessary, transformed to make them more appropriate to diverse Third World settings.

The importance of studying processes of development within their social and cultural contexts has been ignored by most development theories. Hettne observes that development theorists have often stressed the importance of 'non-economic' factors such as culture, only to forget about them after having made the obligatory reference.⁹ Within modernisation theory, cultural factors such as ethnicity typically represented obstacles to development that were rooted in traditional societies and that were destined to disappear in the course of development. The neglect of culture and 'ethnodevelopment' is not merely an oversight of mainstream theories, but should be seen as a paradigmatic blind spot.¹⁰ First, the sociocultural context within which economic processes are shaped has been virtually ignored in the universalist concepts developed by neoclassical theory and related frameworks. Second, development theory has focused almost exclusively on 'states' and 'national economies' as its basic units of analysis, precluding any serious treatment of local cultures and ethnic identities. In most countries, the 'national' culture is a relatively recent and rather artificial construct that is often associated with elitist and centralised (neo)colonial interests rather than traditional sources of identity based along regional and ethnic lines. Indeed, the rise of cultural pluralism and ethnodevelopment represents a challenge to the top-down, integrationist and outward-oriented development projects of transnational capitals, international financial institutions, core capitalist countries and most Third World governments.

Universalism in Mainstream Development Strategies from Modernisation to Neoliberalism

A couple of decades ago Joan Robinson remarked: 'Economic theory ... has nothing to say on the questions that, to everyone except [mainstream] economists, appear to be most in need of an answer.'¹¹ The same might also be

said of mainstream development theories, including both the more traditional modernisation approach and the newer neoliberal framework, for many of the same reasons (eg use of universal concepts that exclude the contextuality of social reality, reliance on unrealistic assumptions, neglect of social relations and structures, failure to consider meanings and values). Modernisation theory can be regarded, at best, as a heuristic device; it was too simplistic and too vague to be taken seriously as a comprehensive theory of development. In the end, it could not establish its relevance to the developing world because it was really a celebration of the achievements of the advanced industrial countries. The framework lacked both a satisfactory historical input from the South itself and an adequate analysis of social relations and structures in specific countries. In particular, patterns of discrimination and inequalities based on social class, ethnicity, gender and other social relations were virtually ignored.

Moreover, little attention was given to the views, wishes and values of the people that were supposedly being developed. Values that differed from those that were thought to characterise the industrialised North (however far this was from reality) were invariably portrayed as obstacles to development that should be eradicated as modernisation proceeds. In a highly normative and ethnocentric manner, Western values were universalised and linked with progress, while the values of traditional Third World societies were denigrated and tied to stagnation and underdevelopment. Modernisation theorists tended to rely on a tautological or circular logic in their treatment of values and culture. Societies that were able to modernise through industrialisation were believed to possess the appropriate values; those which failed to industrialise along Western lines lacked those values. The presence or absence of the requisite value structure was determined *a priori* by the degree of industrial and economic growth—the effect created the cause.¹² Although, in reality, the relationship between values and development processes is complex and dynamic, it is not well conceived by simplistic dichotomies between traditional values/economies and modern values/economies.

Even as heuristic devices, the categories of 'modern' and 'traditional' employed by modernisation theory are low grade because of their imprecision, narrowness and distance from reality. Because it neglects social relations and structures, the traditional-modern dichotomy fails to account for many of the important socioeconomic forces responsible for development in particular societies. In fact, both the basic societies described by modernisation theory are largely fictional: many of the supposedly beneficial traits of modern society are only rarely found in real-world industrial countries, while the detrimental traits of traditional societies are equally difficult to find in developing countries. Moreover, most societies contain some combination of both traditional and modern traits, a fact that is obscured by the mutual exclusivity of the ideal types in the modernisation model. Blanket terms like 'traditional' and 'modern' do not do justice to the variability of societies either in the North or South, neither of which are homogeneous but are invariably fissured by factors such as class, gender, ethnicity and religion. In addition, in real-world situations most elements of traditional and modern societies are not mutually exclusive; constant interaction normally takes place between the traditional and modern sectors of most

developing countries, a fact that is well illustrated by de Janvry's account of 'functional dualism' between the peasantry and capitalist agro-export sectors in Latin America.¹³

Like the older modernisation approach, the newer neoliberal framework also employs universalistic (ideal) theoretical constructs that are based on unrealistic assumptions and exclude much of the variability of Third World social formations. Neoliberalism is rooted in what Hirschman calls the 'monoeconomics' of orthodox neoclassical theory—the notion that there is only one body of economic theory with universally applicable concepts, just as there is only one physics or chemistry.¹⁴ This approach is a product of the rational–deductive method of positivist science; the behaviour of individuals is predetermined by a set of universal rational rules that are deductively posited.¹⁵ Private producers and consumers are presupposed to be utility and profit maximisers who respond rationally and efficiently to correct market signals. As in neoclassical theory in general, neoliberals contend that unfettered markets will produce rational behaviour that efficiently reflects market signals based on principles of scarcity and choice.

However, while neoliberals examine markets using ideal theoretical constructs, governments and states are treated as they exist in practice—with all their various imperfections highlighted. The idealised neoliberal concept of the market neither reflects the diverse realities of Third World markets nor does it form a logical basis from which to compare Third World states as they exist in practice.¹⁶ Highly skewed power relations and structural inequalities within many societies produce real-world markets that are far removed from the ideal types of neoliberal theory. Given such complexity, development policies may work in different ways in different places at different times. Universal answers cannot be found to the development problems of particular countries and regions and, because of this, the simple market-based solutions of the neoliberals are unlikely to succeed in most places.

Modelling techniques and the gap between theory and reality

Within many neoliberal development studies, as well as in neoclassical theory in general, increasing attention has been devoted to the sophistication of modelling procedures and quantitative techniques at the expense of a number of concerns. These include concerns over: the neglect of social complexity and diversity, the omission of non-quantifiable aspects of development, the use of methods and concepts inappropriate for non-Western societies and dependence on unreliable and unsuitable statistics. In order to accommodate its positivistic methodological imperatives, neoclassical research has become narrowly focused on only those variables that can be empirically observed, reduced to quantitative measurements and generalised across all instances. Broader social, human, and moral issues that are not amenable to quantification and modelling techniques are excluded from analysis. In effect, this removes much of the human factor (at the individual level) as well as social relations (at the societal level) from the development paradigm.

Neoclassical researchers who commonly use aggregate socioeconomic

statistics in their empirical models normally pay little attention to the quality of their primary data sources.¹⁷ Widely acknowledged problems basic to Third World data are ignored, including: the poor quality of many statistical series, the inadequate training and other deficiencies of primary researchers and the notoriously inaccurate information offered by some groups of informants. Moreover, in order to make Third World complexities conform to preconceived Western categories and concepts, misplaced aggregations are often employed that inappropriately combine conceptually discrete social forms (eg different types of peasants and other farmers, various informal sector activities, diverse household types). In Third World settings marked by extreme inequalities, aggregate statistics (eg GDP growth rates, per capita income) may also conceal more than they reveal. In general, many of the universal concepts of neoliberal, and by extension, neoclassical theory are tinged with ethnocentrism, while the methods that are commonly employed yield inaccurate results and are inappropriate to most Third World settings. As Miller notes: '[R]eality is trimmed to fit the theory ... Irrespective of the poor fit between the facts and the theory, neither the theorists nor the theory is "in difficulty". The facts are simply assumed away.'¹⁸

Many of these conceptual and methodological shortcomings contribute to a yawning gap between the theory and practice of Third World development. As a result, a large amount of theoretical research is of little significance to the actual practitioners of development in the field, while many development projects and other practical development efforts lack direction or repeat past mistakes for want of a firmer theoretical grounding. All too frequently, the theoreticians and practitioners of development seem to occupy different worlds and speak different languages. For the most part, our theoretical approaches are too formalistic and abstract, too dependent on aggregate data, and too universal and general to be relevant to the everyday world of their would-be beneficiaries. At the same time, there is an accumulated wealth of practical knowledge derived from actual development experiences and on-the-job training that has yet to inform the theoretical literature. One of our most valuable resources for theory construction ought to be the development experience itself in particular regions and countries. This has led some analysts to call on development theorists to adopt a more practical and applied stance in order to become more involved in policy-making, planning and other direct development efforts. For example, Hulme and Turner contend that development theorists ought to abandon their 'conceptual and theoretical straight-jackets'¹⁹ in favour of approaches that reflect the diverse realities of Third World societies and that are focused on the practical problems of development.

Eurocentrism in development studies

Ethnocentrism, of which Eurocentrism is a special case, has been defined as 'the tendency to view one's own ethnic group and its social standards as the basis for evaluative judgments concerning the practices of others ... with the implication that one views one's own standards as superior'.²⁰ To varying degrees Eurocentrism has permeated all our major frameworks of development studies as well as

their component parts within individual academic disciplines.²¹ Within development studies, it has been associated with the neglect of geographical diversity and the misreading of the social and historical experiences of individual countries and regions. Western-based concepts and research methods are infused with a false universalism that serves to legitimate their application as is—without basic refinements or reconstruction—in diverse Third World societies.²²

Characteristically, parallels are sought in non-Western societies that can be related to the historical experience of the West. Research addresses only those phenomena and events that can be conceptually compartmentalised and take on theoretical significance within the accepted (ideological) version of the West's development experience. Other subjects are typically ignored, including those that might prove theoretically challenging or offer unconventional solutions to practical development problems. In addition, little attention is afforded to the views, desires and ambitions of Third World peoples themselves, particularly if they are from traditionally disadvantaged and marginalised social groups (eg the lower classes, the peasantry, women, ethnic minorities).

Eurocentrism has impeded progress in development studies in both the North and South. In the North, it has impoverished development studies and related disciplines by blocking access to alternative concepts and indigenous sources of knowledge from the developing countries themselves. In the South, it has perpetuated intellectual dependence on a restricted group of prestigious Western academic institutions that determine the subject matter and methods of research. Categories and concepts are borrowed which may have been useful and meaningful within their original Western contexts, but which lose much of their meaning and utility in the process of being transposed into Third World contexts. Commonly, the Third World is relegated to the status of a residual category—a type of conceptual 'grab bag' for whatever happens to remain after the important elements of development (characteristic of modern First World societies) have been accounted for.²³ This both obscures the real significance of developments in the South and conditions its inhabitants to accept the 'inevitability' of their inferior position, given the clear superiority of everything Western.

An important part of this process also involves distorting the real impact of (neo)colonialism and its discourses on Third World countries. As Nederveen Pieterse notes, the 'Eurocentric perspective ... [has] served as a manual for imperial management of [Third World] societies'.²⁴ Accordingly, mainstream development frameworks can be seen as a form of neocolonial discourse. The universalism of the concepts of the modernisation approach or, more recently, of neoliberal theory is an adjunct of the hegemonic power of the advanced industrial countries. As Western hegemony has expanded, so has the power of the universal concepts of the West's main intellectual frameworks—invariably at the expense of alternative frameworks that do not accord with Western interests.²⁵

Inappropriateness of Eurocentric concepts to Third World conditions

One of the main reasons why postwar development has so often produced disappointing results in developing countries is that it has attempted, for the most

part, to replicate the West, rather than promote processes of indigenous change within the Third World itself. Inevitably, efforts to replace the traditional values, relationships and institutions of Third World societies with alien Western ones have created rising tensions, uncertainties and feelings of anomie. Typically, Eurocentric development models pay little attention to the historical legacy that created Third World societies, to sociocultural factors and other particularities of those societies, or to national or global structural constraints that may make development along classical Western lines highly unlikely. Universal concepts and theories based on an idealised image of the West may have quite limited relevance to societies with different histories, sociocultural traditions, political institutions and economic structures.

The global conditions currently faced by Third World countries often differ dramatically from those which propelled the initial stages of industrial growth in the core capitalist countries during the last century. Social relations and structures within Third World societies may also depart radically from those found in the West (eg the prolonged presence of the peasantry and other non-capitalist social forms, the rapid growth of the informal sector). Rather than disappearing under the force of modernisation, traditional Third World social structures (eg tribes, castes, kinship groups) have often proven remarkably flexible and resilient. In many cases, they have acted as 'filters' for the spread of modernisation and capitalist relations, causing important variations in patterns of development. Many Third World institutions bear little resemblance to and function quite differently from their First World counterparts. For example, the land, labour, credit and product markets of most developing countries normally do not obey the universal assumptions or formalised economic principles of neoclassical theory.²⁶ Such differences render many of the universal concepts and ready-made strategies of the mainstream development models inoperative. In most cases, if Western-style structures and institutions are to exist in Third World societies, they have to be artificially created and sustained.

The domination of developing countries by Eurocentric theories and strategies of development has had far-reaching consequences. In broad terms, it has arrested processes of indigenous development and preempted possibilities for alternative development projects based on principles of greater self-reliance, more balanced development, and broader popular participation. Inappropriate policies resulting from basic misapprehensions of Third World realities have exacted heavy social, economic, and psychological costs, particularly for the poor majority in most developing societies. Indigenous social structures that have traditionally supported majority interests and have served as sources of identity and popular participation have been undermined without being replaced by viable functioning alternatives. A growing number of analysts now contend that much of the discontent with development in the Third World can be traced to the displacement of traditional values, institutions, and relationships by alien Western counterparts. Bruton, for example, states:

... the basic difficulty [with development] arises from the imposition of Western mechanics and Western artifacts on a society whose traditions and values, whose routines and mores, whose cultural and social arrangements, whose concepts of

economic activity are such that the absorption of such mechanics and artifacts is neither possible nor desired.²⁷

In large part, the new institutions created by modernisation have failed to find roots in the indigenous social and cultural traditions of Third World societies and have therefore remained tenuous. In many countries, imported institutions have created an artificial form of development that has heightened feelings of anomie and disillusionment and fuelled ethnically based social conflict. Contrary to the precepts of modernisation theory, the internalisation of Western ideas and values that has accompanied the spread of these institutions has often proven to be more of an obstacle than a vehicle of development. Commonly, it has been powerful Third World elites who have internalised Western concepts and have used this specialised knowledge to defend their privileged position within the existing social order from alternative ideas about development arising from indigenous sources of popular knowledge. Typically, Western concepts have paid little attention either to the views and wishes of the popular majority or to the types of structural constraints (eg based in relations of class, gender and ethnicity) within which Third World inequalities are so frequently rooted.

Disregard for indigenous knowledge and popular participation

Power has always been a central component of development; without it there is little that the popular majority can do to change their situation. Within Third World societies, the 'professionalisation' of development studies under exclusionary Eurocentric frameworks, the control of this knowledge by elites in their own interests, and the devaluation of alternative sources of popular knowledge have all prevented the majority from participating in centres of decision-making power. Local self-confidence has been undermined and most grassroots social groups and popular organisations have been blocked from acquiring the knowledge and skills that they need to analyse and solve problems for themselves. The transformation of people into agents of their own development, which ought to be the focal point of any broadly based democratic development strategy, has been retarded by exclusionary theories and elitist practices that block the sharing of knowledge and information. At the same time, development theorists and strategists are prevented from understanding much about the real world of the popular majority to which development is ostensibly directed because these 'experts' are so far removed from that world.

Because they are products of an arrogant and ethnocentric era in development thinking dominated by Western experts and modern scientific techniques, the mainstream development frameworks are designed on the assumptions that the development process is unidirectional. Knowledge filters down from a select group of First World academic institutions to the intellectual elite of developing countries (many of whom have been trained at those institutions) and is then dispersed to those (generally upper-middle class) elements with the capacities to absorb it. Progress is envisioned as a universal, unidirectional process, always to be led by elite groups and the richest countries. A highly exclusionary, technical view of development becomes the norm, in which 'the "transmitter" and

"receiver" of information are distanced from each other by a basic inequality in the amount of technical knowledge they each possess'.²⁸ Knowledge, as well as the power to control it, becomes concentrated among the educated elites that possess the skills necessary to understand the technical language and methods being employed. Development professionals and other experts become the only people capable of mediating the transfer of knowledge and skills from one society or group of people to another. Because knowledge is associated with formal Western education and technical training, indigenous concepts and methods are ignored or relegated to a strictly subordinate position. Development studies from the Third World itself that do not conform to accepted Western theories and methods are neglected, as are other potential sources of new insight, understanding and creative solutions to development problems originating from the popular sectors themselves.

The search for indigenous development alternatives

The realisation that external theories and models have blocked out alternative sources of indigenous knowledge has not come easily to the South. There are strong intellectual and material reasons for this delay. Intellectually, much of the development community (including many leading Western-educated professionals from the Third World itself) have maintained that the concepts and methods of the mainstream development models are universally applicable. Materially, these development models have been closely aligned to the interests of the most powerful fractions of capital and their political allies, at both the global and national scales. In recent years, however, rising interest has been shown by some Third World social groups and organisations (particularly those linked to the popular sectors) in the formulation of alternative indigenous concepts and methods of development. Demands for the indigenisation of theories and strategies of development flow from two interrelated concerns: first, that the Western models contain too many false universals and Eurocentric biases to comprehend many crucial issues and problems of Third World development; and, second, that development programmes and policies based on the Western models have brought devastating results to most developing countries, particularly to their poorest, most vulnerable and disadvantaged classes and social groups.

The search for relevant indigenous models and paradigms has taken many directions based on the different development experiences and intellectual traditions of particular Third World areas. Examples include: the rise in the Middle East of a distinctively Islamic model of development based on the ethical principles of the Quran, the development in India of an alternative economics grounded in Gandhian philosophy, the appearance in countries such as Burma and Sri Lanka of a Buddhist economics stressing cooperation and self-sufficiency, the formulation in Africa of rural development strategies based on the traditional egalitarian values of African communalistic societies, and the creation in Nicaragua of a Sandinista model of popular development that rejects the ready-made frameworks of the West and the East in favour of a more flexible alternative more appropriate to Latin American particularities.

Commonly, the search for indigenous models has also led to a reexamination of basic notions about the role of Third World social relations, values and structures in development (eg African tribalism as an important vehicle for constructing new, more egalitarian societies rather than as a dysfunctional or obsolete social form; traditional Confucian values concerning interpersonal relations and social obligations as a key component of East Asian state-led development rather than as a barrier to capitalist modernisation). Following a careful and sensitive reassessment, many of the relations, values and structures that characterise traditional societies may prove surprisingly conducive to development—particularly of alternative forms of development that seek to maximise popular participation. In many cases, traditional societies have mutual support systems that, because of their flexibility and efficiency, may be adapted for use in development projects. For example, Ingham reports that in many Third World rural areas, traditional savings institutions can be adapted to mobilise hitherto unutilised resources for development.²⁹

The trend towards the indigenisation of development theory, which has also often included a strong element of Third World nationalism, has gained momentum in recent years.³⁰ For many in the South, it has become increasingly evident that development may follow many diverse paths that lie beyond the experience of the advanced industrial countries. Because of this, many of the core concepts and theories of the mainstream development frameworks are seen to be, at best, of only limited relevance to Third World societies. Accordingly, a growing number of development analysts are calling for a deconstruction/reconstruction process to commence in development theory. First, to deconstruct our present universalistic development paradigms to sort out what, if anything, remains relevant to the South and what should be discarded. Second, to reconstruct our development frameworks so that they might better serve the diverse interests and needs of the popular majority in various countries and regions. This process will not entail a single reconstruction, but will undoubtedly involve 'polycentric' reconstructions based on the varying itineraries and circumstances of different countries.³¹

At the same time, questions over what, if anything, may be universal in processes of development need to be posed in new ways that will avoid Eurocentrism and permit the use of polycentric concepts based on the distinct experiences of various countries and regions. Concepts and categories may be employed that address general aspects of development characteristic of most Third World areas (eg the popular sectors, the peasantry and semiproletariat, the informal sector), but which can also be modified to incorporate local particularities in social relations and forms. This type of conceptual reconstruction should obviously be closely linked with increases in primary local/regional research and comparative studies within the Third World itself. Such links underscore the need to devote more resources to improving the research capabilities of developing countries. In addition, these countries need to discern better ways of pooling their research competence and resources to find solutions to their own problems. Networks of cooperation and interdependence can be envisioned at several scales, including sub-regional and regional groupings as well as those encompassing the entire South. At the same time, new methods of global cooperation

and interdependence must be worked out so that interested groups in the North may assist efforts in the South to create more appropriate and relevant development frameworks.

Ideological biases in early postwar development frameworks

In addition to their Eurocentric tendencies, mainstream development frameworks in the postwar era have also provided broad ideological supports for the expansion of global capitalism. From growth theory and the modernisation approach in the early postwar era to neoliberalism more recently, the dominant postwar development theories have been ideologically linked to generalised capitalist interests in opening up the South to transnational capital, as well as to more particular US interests in maintaining its hegemonic global position in economic, political and military terms.

The presence of a direct relationship between the rise of modernisation theory and that of US national interests in the expansion of global capitalism has been the subject of much conjecture over the years. For example, Klaren remarks that it can hardly be coincidental that the rise of modernisation theory, with its intellectual roots in the 'liberal developmental thought' of American social sciences, coincided so closely with the global expansion of US economic, political and military power.³² Likewise, Hulme and Turner note that it is not surprising that modernisation theory maintained a 'conservative, pro-capitalist ideological framework', given the Cold War environment and the establishment of close links between the postwar American academic community and 'the political, military, administrative, and business elites in the US'.³³ These and other development theorists argue that the modernisation approach, as a Cold War product of Western, liberal, capitalist values, was inexorably put into service supporting the expansion of global capitalism under American leadership. Modernisation theory is seen as 'still another imperialist Cold War strategy' aimed at tying the Third World into a Western, liberal development pattern within the sphere of influence of the USA and other Western powers.³⁴ At the same time, adherence to the basic principles of modernisation denied possibilities for the rise of alternative development strategies (eg indigenous frameworks, socialist models) that might extricate Third World countries from the Western orbit.

Linkage of modernisation to US and global capitalist interests also helps to explain the strongly ethnocentric and self-serving world view that many analysts attribute to modernisation theory. This suggests that the rise of modernisation theory (as well as other US social science frameworks) should be understood within the context of the US as a growing postwar superpower.³⁵ The increasing popularity of the modernisation approach both reflected and duplicated the expansion of US global power, as well as serving to justify it. Moreover, this also suggests that the domination of development theory by American paradigms in the postwar era may be less a result of the intrinsic merits of these frameworks than of their association with US power. Kolko, for example, finds that much of the intellectual rationale for US interventionism (eg USAID programmes of rural development and 'state-building', CIA security assistance) was supplied by a

generation of American modernisation scholars.³⁶ By the late 1960s many of these scholars had become disillusioned and embarrassed by the realisation that US foreign policy had dominated development in many Third World countries under the guise of modernisation. However, other prominent US development theorists (eg Rostow, Huntington) never believed that this was a problem and, in fact, quite openly used their work as an instrument of American foreign policy.³⁷

The ideological agenda of neoliberal development strategy

Like modernisation theory, neoliberalism has also been ideologically linked to the interests of the USA and other advanced industrial countries in the expansion of global capitalism into Third World areas. The recent rise of neoliberalism has accompanied the increasing power of transnational capital based largely in the core capitalist countries of the North. In addition, neoliberalism was first championed in the 1980s by the conservative administrations of many Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries (eg Reagan in the USA, Thatcher in the UK, Kohl in Germany) and by powerful international organisations (especially multilateral financial institutions such as the IMF and World Bank) that have historically been linked to the expansion of global capitalism under the direction of the transnationals. At the same time, neoliberalism's theoretical agenda, based on neoclassical principles of economic liberalisation, free trade and open markets, has provided intellectual support for the integration of international markets in the interests of these transnational corporations (TNCs).

The emergence of the neoliberal 'counterrevolution' in development theory during the early 1980s should be understood in the context of the general anti-Keynesian ideological wave that swept through the West at the same time. As part of the global ideological agenda of the 'New Right', neoliberalism also turned attention away from basic inequalities in international economic and geopolitical structures by placing the onus for Third World underdevelopment firmly on the South itself (especially on ill-conceived policies such as excessive state spending, the erection of trade barriers and the failure to liberalise markets). This position reacted against and rejected the Western 'guilt-complex' that some analysts have linked to the emergence of 'Third Worldist' postures in the alternative development frameworks (eg dependency and world systems theory) of the 1960s and 1970s.³⁸

In the early 1980s, as the USA under Reagan struggled to shake off the 'Vietnam syndrome' and reassert its position of global capitalist leadership, neoliberalism began to dominate the macroeconomic thinking of the American (transnational) elite and their allies in the Reagan Administration. They stood for a positive approach to development promotion and the expansion of US global influence rather than a retreat into American isolationism and self-doubt. In fact, it was the 1981 global economic summit in Cancún, Mexico—at which Reagan himself gave a major address extolling the benefits of economic liberalisation and reduced state intervention—which best marks the ascendancy of neoliberalism within mainstream development strategy. It also marked a new readiness by

the USA and other OECD countries to assert their global power, after a period of introspection during the 1970s. This was accomplished via the imposition of a neoliberal agenda on a recalcitrant Third World that had run out of other development options in the face of a devastating economic collapse. The last time that the Western powers, and particularly the USA, had moved so confidently to set the world's development agenda had been in the early 1960s, as modernisation theory reached its zenith.

In addition to its links with the TNCs and core capitalist countries, the neoliberal development agenda has also been promoted by multilateral financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF, especially through the imposition of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) on Third World countries. For much of the South, submission to a structural adjustment package has become a condition for receiving external loans or other financial assistance—not only from these multilateral institutions, but also from most other sources of private or bilateral lending. Despite their global scope and formally independent structure, these institutions remain closely associated with the interests of the Western powers (particularly the USA) and transnational (especially financial) capital. Analysts have noted that both the IMF and the World Bank have been subjected to regular interference from the USA and other major Western contributors according to ideological and geopolitical considerations.³⁹ Inconsistencies in the dealings of these institutions with many Third World countries seem comprehensible only in terms of ideological differences and the play of major power interests. For example, in the 1980s Fund/Bank lending programmes were either drastically reduced or denied altogether to a series of countries at odds with US foreign policy (eg Cuba, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Vietnam), while lending was maintained or increased to many countries aligned with US interests (eg Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala, Cote d'Ivoire, Zaire) despite charges of pervasive human rights abuses, corruption and other questionable practices by the governments of these latter countries. These types of inconsistencies in the lending record of the World Bank during the 1980s led one analyst to charge that its policies have been 'highly conditioned by the dominant political agenda of the US administration, and that this has co-opted the scientific agenda and transformed it into a manipulative exercise'.⁴⁰

Other commentators have suggested that informal alliances supporting the neoliberal development agenda have been created not only at the global scale between the IMF/World Bank and the major OECD countries, but also at the national scale in much of the South between these multilateral institutions and dominant fractions of the local elite linked with transnational capital.⁴¹ It has not escaped notice that, especially in many severely polarised societies, the interests of the popular majority may not be well served by such elitist arrangements. Moreover, the imposition of Fund/Bank conditionalities often entails a substantial reduction in sovereignty that restricts the ability of governments in the South to determine policies and shape development in their societies according to local values, aspirations and traditions.

A number of central elements of the neoliberal policy programme itself have also been clearly linked to a specific ideological agenda. Indeed, the theory of neoliberalism as a whole has from the start been openly associated with the New

Right ideology of political conservatism. This was made clear by one of the intellectual founders of neoliberalism, Milton Friedman, in his arguments that laissez-faire capitalism is a necessary condition for broader social and political freedoms.⁴² In subsequent neoliberal development studies, an overarching ideological conception of the market and political systems has characteristically been substituted for careful analytical and empirical investigations of socioeconomic and political relations in different Third World societies.⁴³ Typically, the neoliberal obsession with 'getting the prices right' has led to the abstraction of one sphere of economic activity, that of exchange, from the totality of relations of production and power. This inevitably produces distorted results and a narrow, rather superficial analysis that misses the roots of many development problems within particular socioeconomic structures.

Neoliberal political analysis, especially that framed by public choice theory, combines a more traditional element of economic liberalism with a more modern component of political conservatism that provides an ideological defence for systems of market power versus state intervention. The pro-market and anti-state ideological biases of neoliberalism prevent it from addressing many crucial structural aspects of economic and political relations in the South. Rival traditions of development scholarship that might deepen understanding of development processes are either ignored or caricatured if they do not accord with neoliberal values. This has led many development theorists to decry the domination of much of neoliberalism by ideologues.⁴⁴ It is suggested that the 'analytic dice [of neoliberal development strategy] are value-loaded from the very start to reach predetermined policy positions that are then fed into the political debate as privileged "scientific" conclusions supposedly devoid of any ideological bias ...'⁴⁵ The strength of this ideological commitment has meant that neoliberal policy prescriptions have often been based on value judgments and questionable assumptions rather than solid empirical evidence and logically coherent analysis.

Ideological bias often manifests itself in the processes by which scholars and other development professionals become 'socialised' to the world views, theoretical concepts and models, and analytical techniques of the mainstream development paradigm. This socialisation process often takes place quite gradually and usually proceeds through years of intensive training at one of a limited number of internationally recognised development institutes in leading First World universities. Normally, any connections between the models and techniques of the mainstream development paradigm and particular ideological interests are well obscured. Those who have become socialised through years of painstaking study into the elite of the international development community tend to regard their views and methods as scientifically objective, theoretically sound and analytically superior. Opposing concepts or techniques that do not neatly fit into the well-defined scientific parameters of the set body of (Western) knowledge that they have been taught seem abnormal and unscientific.

The ethnocentric and ideological biases of the mainstream development framework (ie previously modernisation theory, presently neoliberalism) towards the interests of the Western powers and global capital are thus obscured under layers of seemingly objective scientific discourse. Such bias has become a

serious problem not only for Northern development scholars, but also for many development professionals from the South itself. This seems to be particularly the case among Third World professionals within multilateral institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank and other elitist organisations of the global development community. These professionals tend to see their role as one of using their specialised knowledge in the concepts and methods of (Western-style) development to instruct and guide Third World countries that are incapable of generating their own knowledge. The firm belief in the need to instruct and guide the 'Third World other' may be regarded as 'one more reflection of a much broader ethos of Occidental supremacy'.⁴⁶

A large step towards overcoming these biases might be taken by the establishment of independent development institutes or learning centres, perhaps under the auspices of the United Nations or some other equivalent international organisation, to promote more meaningful North-South and South-South dialogue. In contrast to the one-way, top-down flow of knowledge that presently characterises neoliberal development planning, especially under the tutelage of the IMF/World Bank, these centres might create a more cooperative atmosphere and 'level playing field' for the exchange of development methods and ideas. Towards this end, emphasis should also be placed on building up the indigenous capabilities of development institutes and learning centres in the South itself. This would overcome the South's absolute dependency on Northern-based development frameworks and would help to instill a sense of confidence among Third World peoples that they can use their indigenous knowledge and practices to define distinct paths of development appropriate to their individual needs and interests.

Conclusion

Neoliberalism is often depicted in the development literature as a new innovative strategy which should be contrasted with the discredited frameworks, such as modernisation theory and other Keynesian approaches, that dominated mainstream development studies during the early postwar period. However, an analysis of the modernisation and neoliberal development frameworks reveals a number of common problems, including those associated with universalistic models, Eurocentrism and ideological biases. In the end, these shortcomings leave neoliberalism prone to many of the same criticisms that have plagued modernisation theory for the past two decades.

From the older modernisation approach to the more recent neoliberal framework, an ongoing tension has existed in mainstream development studies between the wish to formulate universally valid principles and formal models, on the one hand, and the need to understand the diversity of actual development experiences among different countries, on the other. The grand theories of mainstream development studies seek universal solutions to development problems which neglect the contextuality of development as a product of particular historical processes. Development approaches that are sensitive to the varying needs and interests of different peoples cannot be generated via the direct transplanting of preconceived Northern models into distinct Southern societies.

Instead, we need to 'unlearn' our preconceived notions and reconsider development in terms of particular sociocultural, political, economic and environmental conditions. However, in order to accommodate the positivistic imperatives of its modelling procedures, neoliberalism has increasingly stressed abstract economic modelling. This leaves its models too formalistic and abstract, too dependent on aggregate data, too narrowly focused on economic factors, and too universal and general to be relevant to the everyday world of actual development practices in Third World countries.

Accompanying the universalism of its formal models, the neoliberal framework also exhibits a strong tendency towards Eurocentrism. As with the earlier modernisation approach, this makes many of its concepts and models inappropriate to the conditions prevailing in particular Third World countries. Typically, parallels are sought in non-Western societies for the historical experience of the West. Research addresses only those subjects that can be compartmentalised and take on theoretical significance within the accepted version of the West's development experience. Other subjects which could prove theoretically challenging or might offer unconventional development solutions are commonly ignored, as are indigenous sources of development knowledge from the South itself. This has blocked access to alternative concepts and indigenous knowledge and has fostered an intellectual dependence on Northern concepts and models which have lost much of their meaning and utility in the process of transposing them into Third World contexts. Nevertheless, the search for indigenous development alternatives has picked up momentum in recent years in some parts of the South, encouraged especially by popular social movements.

Finally, neoliberalism displays similar ideological biases to those that have long marked the modernisation approach. Neoliberal development strategies serve the interests of TNCs, based largely in the Northern core capitalist countries, in expanding and deepening global capitalism in the South. The recent rise of the neoliberal counterrevolution should also be understood in the context of the general anti-state, anti-Keynesian ideological wave that swept through the West at the same time. Neoliberalism has especially been promoted by transnational financial capital and associated financial institutions, such as the World Bank and the IMF, which have succeeded in imposing a new development agenda on much of the South via SAPs and other forms of conditional lending. In spite of their global scope and formally independent structures, these institutions are closely associated with the ideological and geopolitical interests of the Western powers, especially of the USA. In addition, many elements of the neoliberal policy programme itself have, from the start, been openly associated with the New Right ideology of political conservatism. This is particularly true of neoliberal political analysis, which has long been accused of ignoring real-world evidence to reach predetermined conclusions in support of its pro-market and anti-state ideological biases.

Notes

¹ H Bruton, 'The search for a development economics', *World Development*, 13, 1985, p 1109.

² For example, A H Somjee, *Development Theory: Critiques and Explorations*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991.

- ¹ For example, T Banuri, *Economic Liberalization: No Panacea: The Experiences of Latin America and Asia*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- ² For example, T J Barnes, 'Rationality and relativism in economic geography: an interpretive review of the homo economicus assumption', *Progress in Human Geography*, 12, 1988, pp 473-496.
- ³ For example, A Touraine, 'Modernity and cultural specificities', *International Social Science Journal*, 40, 1988, pp 443-457.
- ⁴ D Davis, 'Unlearning languages of development: from rhetoric to realism in recent studies of Latin America', *Latin American Research Review*, 27, 1992, pp 152-153.
- ⁵ For example, J Larrain, *Theories of Development: Capitalism, Colonialism and Dependency*, Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1992.
- ⁶ Somjee, *Development Theory*, p 81.
- ⁷ B Hettne, *Development Theory and the Three Worlds*, Harlow, UK: Longman, 1990, p 193.
- ⁸ Ethnodevelopment is a term coined by Stavenhagen for development processes that are not universal but are appropriate for particular ethnic groups. Stavenhagen finds that culture and ethnicity have been neglected not only by modernisation theory and other mainstream development paradigms, but also by many alternative frameworks, including dependency theory and much of the Marxist tradition. Because they focused on external factors, dependency theorists typically paid little attention to cultural issues. For most Marxists, culture has normally been discussed in the context of the 'national question', which lies outside and beyond orthodox Marxist theorising (R Stavenhagen, 'Ethnodevelopment: a neglected dimension in development thinking', in R Aphorpe & A Krahl (eds), *Development Studies: Critique and Renewal*, Leiden: E J Brill, 1986, pp 71-94).
- ⁹ J Robinson, 'The second crisis of economic theory', *American Economic Review*, 62, 1972, p 10.
- ¹⁰ D Jaffee, *Levels of Socio-Economic Development Theory*, New York: Praeger, 1990, p 36.
- ¹¹ Within many Latin American countries, de Janvry finds that the rise of a 'modern' capitalist agro-export sector has been accompanied by land concentrations that have squeezed much of the 'traditional' peasant sector into micro-farms that are insufficient to meet subsistence needs. In order to survive, these peasants are forced to seek seasonal wage labour during the agro-export harvests. Rather than developing separately, as is posited by modernisation theory, important links exist between the traditional and modern sectors that are responsible for supplying agro-export capital with much of its 'comparative advantage' (based on cheap land and labour) in international commodity markets. Dualistic (but closely linked) structures in Latin America's rural areas have thus been functional to the requirements of capitalist growth based on the agro-export model (A de Janvry, *The Agrarian Question and Reformism in Latin America*, Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1981).
- ¹² A O Hirschman, 'The rise and decline of development economics', in Hirschman *Essays in Trespassing: Economics to Politics and Beyond*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, p 4.
- ¹³ E Miller, 'Of economic paradigms, puzzles, and policies—or, is the economy too important to be trusted to the economists?', *Journal of Economic Issues*, 25, 1991, pp 993-1004.
- ¹⁴ For example, B Lesser, 'When government fails, will the market do better? The privatization/market liberalization movement in developing countries', *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, 12, 1991, pp 159-172.
- ¹⁵ For example, P Hill, *Development Economics on Trial: The Anthropological Case for a Prosecution*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- ¹⁶ Miller, 'Of economic paradigms, puzzles, and policies', p 1001.
- ¹⁷ D Hulme and M Turner, *Sociology and Development: Theories, Policies and Practices*, New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990, pp 216-217.
- ¹⁸ G G Joseph, V Reddy & M Scarle-Chatterjee, 'Eurocentrism in the social sciences', *Race and Class*, 31, 1990, p 1.
- ¹⁹ For example, Eurocentric biases have been uncovered in economics, geography, history, mathematics, psychology and social anthropology (eg Joseph *et al*, 'Eurocentrism as in the social sciences', and R Peet, 'The social origins of environmental determinism', *Annals, Association of American Geographers*, 75, 1985, pp 309-333).
- ²⁰ For example, Larrain, *Theories of Development*.
- ²¹ I. Bown, 'The nature and role of development studies in present-day Britain', *World Development*, 16, 1988, pp 633-634.
- ²² J Nederveen Pieterse, 'Dilemmas of development discourse: the crisis of developmentalism and the comparative method', *Development and Change*, 22, 1991, p 8.
- ²³ For example, C Kay, 'For a renewal of development studies: Latin American theories and neoliberalism in the era of structural adjustment', *Third World Quarterly*, 14, 1993, pp 691-702; and D Slater, 'The geopolitical imagination and the enframing of development theory', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 18, 1993, pp 419-437.
- ²⁴ Many commentators would argue that these markets do not function according to neoclassical principles in the advanced industrial countries either.

- ²⁷ Bruton, 1985, 'The search for a development economics', p 1104.
- ²⁸ M Edwards, 'The irrelevance of development studies', *Third World Quarterly*, 11, 1989, p 118.
- ²⁹ B Ingham, 'The meaning of development: interactions between "new" and "old" ideas', *World Development*, 21, 1993, p 1814.
- ³⁰ However, the rise of neoliberalism and structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) also represents a powerful counter tendency towards the reassertion of a Eurocentric development model that supports Western interests and employs universal concepts based on Western history.
- ³¹ Nederveen Pieterse, 'Dilemmas of development discourse', p 26.
- ³² P Klaren, 'Lost promise: explaining Latin American underdevelopment', in Klaren & T Bossert (Eds), *Promise of Development: Theories of Change in Latin America*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986, pp 8-9.
- ³³ Hulme & Turner, *Sociology and Development*, p 34.
- ³⁴ H J Wiarda, 'Toward a non-ethnocentric theory of development: alternative conceptions from the third world', *Journal of Developing Areas*, 17, 1983, p 438.
- ³⁵ For example, F Gareau, 'The political economy of social science: where the trail leads', *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 31, 1990, pp 49-66; and G A Huaco, 'Ideology and General Theory: the case of sociological functionalism', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 28, 1986, pp 34-54.
- ³⁶ G Kolko, *Confronting the Third World. United States Foreign Policy 1945-1980*, New York: Pantheon, 1988, pp 131-134.
- ³⁷ I Smith, 'Requiem or new agenda for third world studies?', *World Politics*, 37, 1985, pp 532-561.
- ³⁸ Heltne, *Development Theory and the Three Worlds*, p 58.
- ³⁹ Other empirical studies have shown that the major Western powers absolutely dominate decision making within these institutions. In the IMF, for example, J Gold (*Voting and Decisions in the International Monetary Fund*, Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 1972, p 68) found that the USA, Japan and Western Europe controlled 88.94% of the votes among the Executive Directors. For other examples of IMF and World Bank interference, see G Biggs, *La crisis de la deuda latinoamericana frente a los precedentes históricos*, Buenos Aires: Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 1987; and J Petras & M Morley, *Latin America in the Time of Cholera: Electoral Politics, Market Economics, and Permanent Crisis*, New York: Routledge, 1992.
- ⁴⁰ S Cole, 'World Bank forecasts and planning in the third world', *Environment and Planning*, 21, 1989, p 177.
- ⁴¹ For example, R Broad, *Unequal Alliance: The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Philippines*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988; S George, *A Fate Worse than Debt: The Financial Crisis and the Poor*, New York: Grove Press, 1988; and P Ruccio, 'When failure becomes success: class and the debate over stabilization and adjustment', *World Development*, 19, 1991, pp 1315-1334.
- ⁴² For example, M Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1962, chs 1, 2.
- ⁴³ For example, J Dietz & D James, 'Trends in development theory in Latin America: from Prebisch to the present', in Dietz & James (eds), *Progress Toward Development in Latin America: From Prebisch to Technological Autonomy*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1990, pp 1-11; and G White, 'Towards a political analysis of markets', *IDS Bulletin*, 24, 1993, pp 4-11.
- ⁴⁴ For example, M Bienenfeld, 'The lessons of history and the developing world', *Monthly Review*, 41, 1989, pp 9-11; J Dearlove, 'Economists on the state', *IDS Bulletin*, 18, 1987, pp 5-12; and G K Helleiner, *The New Global Economy and the Developing Countries. Essays in International Economics and Development*, Brookfield, VT: Grower, 1990.
- ⁴⁵ Dearlove, 'Economists on the state', p 10.
- ⁴⁶ Slater, 'The geopolitical imagination and the enframing of development theory', p 427.

Dependency and world systems

Barry Gills

Capitalism and the Third World: Development, Dependence and the World System

WIL HOUT, 1993

Aldershot, UK: Edward Elgar

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This is an important volume worthy of careful examination. Wil Hout's study of dependence has the rather rare quality of being a text essentially about development theory which, however, purports to address an International Relations audience. Hout sets out to assess dependency on its scientific merits, but the novelty of the book rests in its rejection of the Popperian methodological principle of falsification. Hout does not seek to arrive at either an unconditional acceptance or a rejection of dependency theory. Rather, following the philosophy of science espoused by Laudan, he seeks to establish, through what can rightly be called very rigorous empirical method, whether dependency theory can be considered scientifically 'progressive', ie 'does it solve problems better than its predecessors and competitors' and, is it 'an acceptable statement of the problem'? So, while not seeking a typical 'empirical testing' of dependency theory, Hout seeks to provide 'a meta-theoretical evaluation of dependency theory as one of the approaches in the discipline of international relations'.

Wil Hout's book consists of, in his own words, 'a confrontation of dependency theory with empirical data', though of course his is not the first exercise in empirical testing of dependency hypotheses. Curiously, however, despite its initial terms of reference, the book seldom speaks directly to International Relations theory or theorists, not even in the conclusion, which is mainly devoted to assessing the results of the empirical examination. Nevertheless, the text does point out the challenges that dependency theory continues to pose to the dominant International Relations tradition regarding the central problems (subordination and exploitation vs diplomacy and war); the unit(s) of analysis (the capitalist world system vs sovereign nation-states); and the image of order in the international system (hierarchy vs anarchy). This is all to the good.

The strongest direct critiques in the book, however, are those of the Marxist and neo-Marxist theories of imperialism, the liberal theory of international trade, the ECLA perspective on import substitution industrialisation, and modernisation theory. In all these cases Hout adroitly identifies key problems left unsolved by these predecessors and competitor theories that dependency theory seems to have addressed in a more 'progressive' manner, in a scientific sense. Indeed, this section of the book has outstanding merit as a pedagogic tool for undergraduate and postgraduate courses requiring a concise review of such theoretical controversies. It may be particularly helpful that Hout strives to clarify the important differences first between traditional theories of imperialism and dependency theory, and then between neo-Marxist theories and dependency, despite the resemblance in terminology they share. Hout does in fact defend the verdict that dependency constitutes a significant progressive 'problem shift'. In this respect, the critical problem addressed anew by dependency theory is of course the explanation of 'the lack of development in the Third World despite the supposedly progressive nature of capitalism'.

Hout is generous in his criticism, in that he likewise subjects dependency theory itself to a systematic rigorous inspection, seeking out the 'anomalies of dependency' with

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considerable vigour and precision. The litany of sins here recanted by Hout are familiar by now, for instance 'too much emphasis upon the identical influence of the international capitalist system on Third World countries'; and 'overemphasis on the economic world order and its consequent neglect of political factors'; and a failure to recognise that 'policies pursued by individual countries may cause important differences in the situation in those countries'. Hout returns to these themes of criticism in his conclusions.

While this book provides a very concise and useful summary of the dependency theory of André Gunder Frank, Samir Amin and Johan Galtung (again to be highly recommended to students), its treatment of Immanuel Wallerstein's world-system approach is something of an anomaly in itself. On the one hand, Wil Hout rightly identifies Wallerstein's work as a *variant of dependency theory*. He thus rectifies the too often held notion that world-system theory supercedes dependency theory, and places Wallerstein's opus in its proper context in intellectual history. On the other hand, Hout's general treatment of the world-system approach is otherwise somewhat odd, since he does not subject it to the same empirical examination as dependency. Hout explains this by arguing that Wallerstein's work is in fact 'less a dependency theory than a description and analysis of the development of the "capitalist world economy"': that Wallerstein's *magnum opus*, being mainly historical, has so far not reached the current period; and that his various essays on postwar affairs are 'either too schematic or too detailed to be the source of an empirical model of international relations'. While all of the above may be accurate statements, it is nevertheless odd that Hout omits Wallerstein from the empirical testing (given he decided to include him at all), since this book purports to speak to the International Relations community and Wallerstein's approach seems to embody something most like a comprehensive alternative conception of International Relations in comparison with other dependency theories.

Though much of this book is occupied by a useful summary and critique of key theories, as already mentioned, the real thrust of Hout's work is his empirical 'testing' of various dependency theory hypotheses. His attempt to model the various theories and to operationalise the key concepts is fairly successful, with a few *caveats* to be noted. However, the composition of his sample cases has some rather serious deficiencies. His selection of countries is limited only to those developing countries with a population of at least one million in 1967 and below a certain GNP per capita. These criteria result in the complete elimination of micro-states and many important small states. For example, in Asia and the Pacific, such states as Brunei, Fiji and Bhutan are eliminated. In the Caribbean, countries such as the Bahamas, Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, and Belize are omitted. Curiously, and almost certainly with important consequences for the results of the analysis, virtually all the Arab Gulf states are left out, including Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, and even Saudi Arabia. While including Singapore, Hong Kong, and South Korea, the fourth 'tiger'—Taiwan—is strangely excluded. In addition, odd cases are included, such as South Vietnam, with real data for only one 'country time' (1965), Laos at only 1985, Cambodia at only 1965, and Yugoslavia, and Cuba, though Mongolia, North Korea, North Vietnam and China are omitted altogether, as well as less developed socialist states in Eastern Europe or the Balkans. In Africa, Hout's criteria have eliminated Botswana, Cape Verde, Congo (Brazzaville), Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Namibia, São Tomé and Príncipe, and in the Indian Ocean, both Mauritius and the Seychelles are left out. In some cases countries were eliminated because over 40% of the values were missing in the available data. Where data for only some country times was missing, Hout used SPSS-X option mean-substitution.

He thus arrived at a truncated sample of Third World countries, containing only 84 countries, with a total of 242 country times (1965, 1975, 1985). To be precise therefore,

his findings relate specifically to *this* sample of the chosen 84 countries. Generalisation of the results from this sample should therefore be undertaken with some caution. Eschewing multiple regression analysis, the technique often used in other empirical studies of this kind, Hout opts for a pooled cross-sectional analysis. The greatest strength of his approach is the elegance of his modelling and the precision of his operationalisation of concepts, as previously noted. Here it must be pointed out, however, that his operationalisation of the critical concept, ie dependency, has tended towards quite a broad definition, based on seven variables (four trade-related and three financial and technological). Through factor analysis he arrives at a 'cluster' of variables that account for the greater part of the variance in all variables. Three factors are thereby extracted: trade dependence, trade partner dependence, and financial dependence. The strength of this device is that it does yield more differentiated results, thus revealing more complexity in dependency relationships than might otherwise have been the case. I will return to this below. However, this approach, in my view, tends to stray away from the strict notion of dependence defined as the process of the transfer of surplus that results in underdevelopment rather than development. Indeed, Hout has taken the concept of 'exploitation' and operationalised it in a manner that resembles the strict notion of dependence defined as the transfer of surplus.

There are several other problems that must be addressed in Hout's operationalisation that may have an important bearing on our interpretation of his results. First, data on the export value of fuels is excluded from his calculation of the export value of primary commodities as a percentage of total exports (used to approximate 'primary commodity orientation'). Second, and even more surprisingly, data on the stock of MNC investment are not included in his data for the 'degree of dependence'. Furthermore, when assigning value signs to the A/B (expansion/contraction) phases of the world economy since 1965, he assigns +1 to 1965 (expansion), -1 to 1975 (recession), and a curious neutral 0 to 1985, designated as a period of global economic 'recovery'. This assignment of the neutral value 0 to 1985 raises the problem of how the debt crisis is analysed in this study. The debt crisis is initially swept under the carpet in the formal empirical analysis, but inexorably raises its ugly head again in the interpretation of the results in the conclusion. It would have perhaps been more appropriate to have designated 1985 with a -1 value, following the sense of the position taken by Frank and others that the B phase that began circa 1968 continued throughout the 1980s, and indeed the Debt Crisis of the Third World and the subsequent structural adjustment programmes attest to the severity of the dislocations this continuing global crisis imposed on Third World societies.

Perhaps the most crucial problem in Hout's operationalisation, however, is his controversial decision to reject the terms of trade in his operationalisation of 'exploitation' which, as I have already noted, he tends to substitute for the classic notion of dependence defined as surplus transfer from underdeveloped countries to developed countries. His alternative choice in favour of investment debits and interest payments as a percentage of merchandise exports may account for the nature of some of his findings and the logical prescriptions that flow from them, discussed further below. In short, this choice may have led the results towards affirmation of the positive benefits of international trade and particularly of the export orientation pursued by the East Asian Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs). Finally, his choice of 'spin-off' indicators of development seem not to be the best, where such indicators as the number of scientists, universities, research institutions, and possession of advanced technologies would have been more meaningful. To most of these charges, Hout pleads lack of data as the reason for his alternative choice. Scientific rigour surely has its vicissitudes for the researcher, but it may also produce its own peculiar dissatisfaction for the reader and the general interests of the scientific community. Multiple omissions, less preferable operationalisations, and even arguably 'necessary' massaging of the data may inadvertently skew

'empirical' findings towards a particular outcome, whether intended or unintended. This is always a problem with studies of this magnitude and complexity.

The above serves as a necessary preface to the following final comments on the meaningful conclusions of Hout's impressive study of dependency. As opposed to Hout's affirmation of the scientific value of the general propositions of dependency theory, his conclusions focus heavily upon the elements of the theory he finds weakest or unsupported by the data. Let us note in passing that he does not in the end sufficiently return to the supposedly central concern of the study, ie relating dependency theory to general International Relations theory. Be that as it may, his findings on dependency theory itself are somewhat controversial—not least to dependency theorists—while also somewhat compelling in a number of areas. As expected, the results are not conclusive; some elements of theory are upheld while others are found to lack support. What is most striking, however, is the degree to which Hout's findings are sometimes contradictory, as the following comments reveal.

On the whole, Hout finds that the explanatory value of all three dependency theories he reviews (Frank, Amin, Galtung) is moderately high, though not exceptionally high. The proportion of variance explained by Frank's model is an overall 0.53, for Amin 0.55, and for Galtung 0.56. Interestingly, in all three cases, the dependency theory accounts for the highest proportion of the variance for the 1985 country times, respectively: 0.62 (Frank), 0.77 (Amin) and 0.70 (Galtung). Conversely, they tend to account for a much lesser proportion of the variance for the 1965 country time, respectively: 0.43 (Frank), 0.62 (Amin) and 0.53 (Galtung). This might be interpreted as being consistent with the conditions in the world economy, ie that 1965 was a peak in the post war A/expansionary phase, while 1985 was actually a point of *deepening* dependency patterns, accentuated by the debt crisis, rather than the 'recovery' Hout designates it to be.

Following this last observation more closely, Hout contends, in his assessment of Frank's model, that the 'state of the world system', ie the A/B phases, has a *negative* (as opposed to the predicted *positive*) impact on 'trade dependence', and has *no* influence on 'financial dependence'. However, he provides only a single overall result for the entire period 1965–1985, and no computation for the specific periods 1965, 1975 and 1985 considered separately. This may be compounded by the already mentioned mis-designation of 1985 as a 0 value 'recovery' and the subsumption of the debt crisis within this putative recovery. On the whole, however, Hout finds support for the central dependency thesis that 'periods of recession and crisis offer more opportunities for the developing countries to loosen ties with the centre'.

Hout's path analysis approach produced a positive and significant coefficient for the relationship between the 'state of the world system' and 'trade partner dependence'. The relationship between 'financial dependence' and the concentration of production resulted in a coefficient which is negative and significant for 1985 (ie in the wake of or during the debt crisis), whereby 'more dependent countries appear to have been less focused on primary products than other countries', suggesting that attempts at diversification were actually rather more successful in comparison to the IMF/IBRD campaigns for structural adjustment! This finding that those countries deemed most 'dependent' were actually less reliant on a few primary commodity exports, seems to turn the sense of dependency theory virtually upside down. Furthermore, when assessing Amin's model, Hout claims that 'the general influence of primary commodity concentration on exploitation is negative: countries that are specialized in the production of agricultural products and raw materials generally experience less exploitation than non-specialized countries'. The notable exception to this is 1985, admittedly 'under the influence of the international debt crisis', wherein more specialised primary product producers 'become more vulnerable to exploitation than others'. Nevertheless, in general Hout concludes that depen-

dependency's prediction of a negative relationship between primary commodity concentration and development is indeed supported by the data.

In terms of the general relationship between 'dependency' and development, the crux of all dependency theory, Hout derives a result from his test of Galtung's model that basically confirms the classic hypothesis: 'dependence is negatively related to development'. Curiously, however, Hout here again throws a curve ball at all 'conventional' dependency wisdom, by claiming that 'The period of the debt crisis is an exception to the general trend: during this period, countries that were more dependent on a small number of trade partners and/or on foreign finance tended to be relatively more developed than others'. Yet, again upon assessing Galtung, Hout says that 'In periods of relative economic decline, countries specializing in primary commodities appear to suffer from more exploitation than other countries, while these countries tend to be less exploited during economic upswings'. If, as I have argued above, exploitation can here actually be taken to be the operationalised form of the strict classic notion of dependency itself (surplus transfer/underdevelopment), then Hout is really saying that the 'state of the world system' does indeed seem to influence deeper 'dependence' for those countries 'dependent' on primary product exports during periods of global contraction/recession/B phases.

Perhaps most provocative of all the findings is Hout's contention that, in both the Frank and Amin models, the relationship between 'exploitation' and development is not negative as predicted, but actually *positive*. He therefore contradicts the central tenet of classic dependency theory, 'that countries that are subject to exploitation lose an important part of their resources to the countries of the centre'. The conclusion he derives from this finding is even more controversial. Hout's empirical findings seem to bring us inexorably back full circle to conventional (even Ricardian) international trade theory and the logical prescriptions of the Heckscher-Ohlin model. He argues that in fact 'the integration of developing countries in the international trade system does not hamper, but, on the contrary, stimulates their development'. Going even further, Hout concludes that 'On the whole, dependence has a positive influence on the level of exploitation, while exploitation positively influences development'. Hout admits that 'This result is clearly irreconcilable with dependency theory's thesis that dependence makes developing countries more vulnerable to exploitation and that this situation leads to underdevelopment'. One is therefore in something of a quandary to decide whether Hout has done dependency theory a service by defending its scientific value on the one hand, or apparently demolished its central tenets on the other!

His final prescriptions come uncomfortably close to affirming the 'conventional economic wisdom' of the recent and ongoing period of liberalisation and so-called 'globalisation'. This is nowhere more obvious than in his conviction that 'policies do matter' and particularly those that were pursued by the NICs, especially the East Asian tigers. Hout's study, by his own admission, adds weight to others that have 'cast heavy doubt' upon the validity of the assumption that trade, aid, foreign investment and lending are truly mechanisms of 'exploitation'. Nevertheless, it is not entirely novel or even apocryphal for Hout to say that centre-periphery relations, though always existing or 'threatening', are not immutable, and are therefore subject to change, thus affirming the possibility of 'upward' mobility towards the core as well as 'downward mobility' towards the periphery. It is also possible to accept that for some countries, under certain conditions, participation in international trade is a route to wealth creation and even to 'development'.

More to the point, it is Hout's general enthusiasm for East Asian NIC experience with export orientation that may be a bit misleading and perhaps somewhat mis-informed. He advocates the idea that inviting foreign direct investment probably had more positive

benefits than negative consequences, and cautions that borrowing on the international capital market is probably the more dangerous road. But we should pause and note that South Korea's previous success, on the contrary, has often been explained in terms of the reversal of Hout's prescription, ie South Korea long succeeded in limiting its penetration by foreign MNCs and financed its aggressive industrial expansion and export orientation via heavy foreign borrowing. Hout rightly notes that Robert Wade, for one, has cast doubt on the notion that other Third World states could replicate the very specific mix of characteristics that have accounted for East Asian NIC success, particularly the political aspects.

What Hout does confirm, and a point that in my mind has wider validity, is that the real aim of developing countries should be to create a 'more differentiated industrial production structure', since reliance on a few primary commodities 'has proven to be detrimental to their development'. Deciding the best means of achieving this goal remains an open empirical question. It is perhaps going too far to accept, as Hout contends, that 'trade dependence can be concluded to have almost no influence on the level of exploitation and development of Third World countries', a position which, as Hout confirms, tends to lead us straight back to the neo-classical conventional wisdom on the 'positive contribution of trade', ie that 'trade involves transactions that are potentially beneficial to all trading partners, and enhance the welfare of all partners'. This 'insight', according to Hout, 'has been discarded too quickly by the dependency theorists'. This really is back to square one! The progressive problem shift that dependency undertook was precisely to examine why, despite supposedly benign or positive international economic conditions and the 'progressive' nature of capitalism, many Third World countries had not benefited or had failed to develop. No wonder then, that Hout's ultimate punchline is that 'The identification of imperialism with capitalism is not only wrong, but also unnecessary'. In fact, 'countries experiencing a higher level of exploitation are more developed than countries that are exploited less'. There could hardly be a more appropriate doctrine to accompany the rosy fingered dawn of the new age of 'globalised' free trade!

BOOK REVIEWS

Global dreams: Imperial Corporations and the New World Order

RICHARD J BARNET & JOHN CAVANAGH, 1994

New York: Simon and Schuster

480 pp, \$25.00hb

There is an interesting argument in this book, another in the long series of popularising books by Richard Barnett and his co-authors. It is that national governments are being held responsible for outcomes over which they may be losing control. The reason for this is the growing 'globalisation' of the world economy. As in many other recent works on globalisation, the term is not carefully defined here. The authors suggest that it means the creation of 'global webs' or that it is the process of 'global economic integration', but do not attempt to be more precise (pp 13–14).

They argue that globalisation 'is not really global' (p 427) because most of the world's population are not participants in the so-called 'global economy', being too poor to be significant producers or consumers of global goods and services, with the possible exception of global cultural goods (radio, television, movies, etc). There is, in other words, a Global North and a Global South (p 428). Furthermore, globalisation has the effect of eroding local cultures, even beyond the real boundaries of the global economy, without replacing them with something equally satisfying. There needs, as a result, to be a global civil society to counteract the evil effects of the global economy ruled by global corporations. This can happen only if 'people, acting with the spirit, energy, and urgency our collective crisis requires, can develop a democratic global consciousness rooted in authentic local communities' (p 430).

The global economy is defined by global corporations which are 'the first secular institutions run by men (and a handful of women) who think and plan on a global scale (p 15)'. Globalisation therefore means that power has shifted in the direction of these globally organised multinational corporations (MNCs). As a result, there is a problem of authority at the international level. The actors with power, the MNCs, are not accountable to the people who live in nation-states, while the governments of nation-states, which are more likely to be accountable, have no power, or at least less power than they used to have.

This is the basic argument of the book, but unfortunately it is not well defended.

The method employed here is to divide the world economy into four global subdivisions: the cultural bazaar, the shopping mall, the workplace and the financial network. The authors selected for examination a small number of global firms that operate in one or more of these subdivisions: Sony, Bertelsmann, Philip Morris, Ford Motor Corporation and Citibank. They provide many interesting tidbits of history on these firms (based mainly on interviews and a somewhat shallow review of secondary sources) in order to buttress their overall thesis. However, some of the bits do not fit their argument very well.

For example, their informants at Bertelsmann tell them that many of their products (eg books and magazines) are not global in nature and that their organisation has to be very decentralised to reflect this fact. Similarly, they learn that Bertelsmann management remains predominantly German in nationality, while Sony uses Americans only in acquired businesses like records and films that have been traditionally based in the USA. The top management of Sony is Japanese. The same system applies in most US companies.

Also, they learn that MNCs are trying to become 'stateless' rather than global (pp 280–281). By this, they mean that the firms are trying to be good citizens of whatever country they operate in, and do not insist upon forcing a global identity on their foreign subsidiaries. Why should they bother to do this if the various governments where they do business do not retain important power over them? Why would governments worry about this if their constituents did not think it was important?

Indeed, the authors acknowledge the residual power of national governments in the following passage:

Corporations dream of escaping the laws of any nations that restrict the free movements of goods, information, and profits.

But at the same time global companies everywhere look to their home governments to protect their existing markets and to provide muscle for penetrating new markets, to keep labor and environmental costs down, and to subsidize their operations in various ways. (p 281)

In short, the world economy is really not as global as the authors of this book say it is. Not yet. The extent of globalisation may be greater than in previous eras, particularly in universal cultural goods and in financial transactions. Also, there is clearly a much greater willingness in the current system to look for highly productive low-wage labour outside the home country or region. People in the poorest regions of the world appear to be more willing and able to move to places that offer greater economic opportunities.

Only parts of the Third World have benefited from these changes, but the authors of this book are too quick to say that there is a crisis looming. They are correct in saying that most people in the Third World are now limited to the role of 'window-shopping' at the global shopping mall even as they become workers in the global workplace. These people want to become full participants in the global economy while retaining their sense of local identity and authenticity. That is probably what we all want. But, for the moment, nobody is defining the status quo as requiring a revolution. I suspect that the underpaid workers of the Third World will form labour unions and lobby their national governments for better labour laws before they turn their attention to the organisation of the global economy. Thus, while there is much useful and entertaining information in this book, the authors' call to global consciousness is still premature.

JEFFREY A HART
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International Economic Organisations and the Third World

MARC WILLIAMS, 1994

Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf

This book examines the relationship between the Third World and four main international economic organisations (IEOs) the IMF, the World Bank, GATT and UNCTAD. It critically analyses the demands of the Third World and the responses of the IEOs, as well as competing interpretations of the relationship.

Williams begins with a timely discussion of the continued utility of the term 'Third World'. He argues that the term is less valid as an economic expression than as a political and ideological concept: 'an expression of the perception and consciousness of a certain degree of powerlessness in world politics'. (p 4)

The link between the Third World and IEOs is seen as a cooperative one whereby the Third World negotiates with IEOs in order to pursue Third World interests. One important contribution made by the book is to look at organisational processes and how these determine the nature of Third World participation in the global political economy. The conclusion is that few generalisations are possible.

The book adopts a structural functionalist approach to IEOs. The style is easily accessible, demonstrating the author's knowledge of the workings of these omniscient organisations. The chapters wade their way through various and competing critiques of IEOs and their developmental role and at times the book can appear disjointed. Yet the plethora of references at the end of each chapter gives the reader ample access to pursue further the issues raised therein.

When discussing IMF conditionality, Williams points out that 'it is futile to wish for a world in which bankers did not attach conditions to loans' (p 83). Furthermore the impact of IMF conditionality on the Third World is inconclusive and disputed; thus 'there is no correlation between Fund programmes and political instability' (p 92).

The chapter on the World Bank includes a timely analysis of the Bank's Environmental Facility. The Bank has, it claims, been in the forefront of the 'intellectual challenge to investigate the links between the environment and development' (p 132). Nevertheless, Williams argues that it may be that the Bank's capitalist ideology is incompatible with an environmentally sound approach.

The analysis of GATT is up to date and includes a browse through the recent Uruguay round. Importantly, in an era when most states have moved towards liberal trade policies, Third World

objectives have increasingly coincided with those of the GATT, in particular on the issue of agricultural trade.

One of the most interesting chapters, for comparative purposes, is that on UNCTAD. As is pointed out, UNCTAD represents the only IEO which was created by the Third World to serve their interests and purposes. It thereby represents the antithesis of the other IEOs. Unfortunately it has largely failed in its legitimate objective of obtaining a more just world order. This in effect illustrates Williams' argument that the Third World collectively cannot put issues of distributive justice on the agenda because it lacks the political and economic power to do so. Increased Third World participation in decision making procedures of IEOs would not necessarily alter outcomes, because the economic strength of the industrialised countries affords them a greater say in organisational outcomes.

Overall the book presents a less than critical review of the IEOs, which leads to the obvious and frequently asked question of where the real obstacles to development lie. However, it makes a useful contribution to the literature on international organisations, in particular from the perspective of how Third World concerns are (not) dealt with.

ANNA K DICKSON
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The Transition to Independence in Namibia

LIONEL CLIFFE with RAY BUSH, JENNY LINDSAY, BRIAN MOKOPAKGOSI, DONNA PANKHURST & BALEFT TSE, 1994

Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner,
294 pp

This welcome addition to the literature on Namibia is one of several new books addressing the transition to statehood by South Africa's former colony, and its immediate aftermath. Lionel Cliffe's team originally set out to document the UN-supervised election process in 1989, but what has finally emerged is a far more in-depth and considered study of the transition period as a whole, itself well contextualised in recent Namibian history. My principal regret is that publication took over four years from the time of those elections, thus losing some of the immediacy. There are compensations, however, in terms of the enhanced scope and greater ability to reflect with hindsight than would otherwise have been possible. Paradoxically also, publication just ahead of the forthcoming parliamentary elections in December 1994, Namibia's first since independence, lends the book another form of topicality.

Rather than opt for the conventional edited format, the authors drafted different parts of the text for discussion and revision by others in the team, with the task of producing the final manuscript falling to Cliffe as principal author. Happily, the result is a generally readable text, which develops in a clear and remarkably seamless manner. The Introduction sets the scene well, sketching the terrain to be covered in an analytical rather than simply documentary fashion. In seeking to understand why Namibia's transition occurred, and in the particular form and at the time that it did, comparative reference to transitions of decolonisation elsewhere in Africa is rightly regarded as important.

The second chapter provides the historical background to the process, sketching some of Namibia's basic features and outlining the origins of the conflict and the positions of the contending forces. While it is clearly impossible to pack a comprehensive history of twentieth century Namibia into 30-odd pages, this chapter distils a great deal of pertinent material and insights that will be of great assistance to readers less familiar with Namibia. Inevitably, though, one could take issue on several points. Notwithstanding the availability since late 1992 of provisional results of the 1991 census, giving a total population of 1.4 million, the authors continue to rely on outdated secondary sources or inflated estimates, eg a 1990 national population of 1.7 million (p 13). The map of population distribution is undated but I am sure that it is from the problematic 1981 census. Later on (p 39), the white population is put at 10% of the total, implying 170 000 people, yet there have been no more than 70 000-75 000 since the early 1980s. The skewed distribution of opportunities and resources is therefore even more pronounced.

Several misrepresentations and omissions have crept in, for example the suggestion that the arrest of alleged SWAPO spies by the movement in exile took place only in 1984, when detentions continued until the peace process was underway in 1988. Discussion of the changing balance of power in the

conflict between Angolan government forces and those of South Africa and UNITA (p 29) omits reference to the large Cuban presence which was vital to the former, although this issue is developed fully in a later chapter. The extent and significance of change outside the military-security sphere effected by the internal administrations under South African patronage in the late 1970s and 1980s also warranted somewhat greater coverage.

In discussing the constraints on SWAPO's ability to politicise the population at large in comparison to the Mau Mau in Kenya and ZANU in Zimbabwe (p 30), the authors make several valuable points about the lack of appeal to the supernatural or to spirit media in seeking to mobilise support; the great importance of the churches in the liberation struggle; and the inability to use land dispossession as a rallying point in northern Namibia because this had not really occurred there, unlike in the rest of the country. Perhaps surprisingly, in view of the heated recent debates about such issues in the literature on Mozambique, the authors do not, however, at any stage raise the crucial question of the extent to which the avowedly Marxist--as distinct from more general anticolonial--rhetoric and programme of SWAPO in exile before 1988/9 found resonance among different segments of the predominantly rural and conservative population.

The search for an internationally acceptable transition to independence forms the subject of Chapter 3. This is a clear and well-read account which suggests, for example, that available evidence points clearly to Cuban involvement in Angola having been motivated by 'socialist internationalism' rather than mere Soviet surrogacy. The importance of Ronald Reagan's November 1980 election victory, in terms of US attitudes to South Africa and the 'linkage' question, which became central to the interminable delays in implementing the agreed peace plan embodied in UN Security Council Resolution 435 of 1978 (itself the subject of Chapter 4), is also emphasised. I can attest to this as I was engaged in politically quite sensitive doctoral research in Namibia at the time. Under Jimmy Carter's presidency, there had still been a chance that the UN plan would be activated, bringing white supremacy and South African rule to an end. The uncertainty in Namibia was palpable. However, the total change in mood and atmosphere (black gloom, white jubilation) on the streets of Windhoek the morning after Reagan's victory became known is one of my most vivid and depressing memories of that period. It instantly became clear that Namibian independence would be set back considerably.

Part 2 of the book, comprising three chapters, focuses on the actual transition period culminating in the elections of November 1989. The political climate was complex and difficult, particularly as the bloodbath between SADF and SWAPO fighters at the start of the formal ceasefire on 1 April 1989 so nearly aborted the whole process. This vexed episode is analysed sensitively and dispassionately, both in its own right and in terms of its subsequent ramifications. Useful comparisons are again drawn with Zimbabwe, where, unlike Namibia (despite periodic claims by SWAPO), the guerrillas had created significant 'liberated zones'. Problems of violence and intimidation during the pre-election and election periods are well covered, together with more detailed examinations of the situation in different regions of the country and the role of the UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG). The authors accept that the actual voting was free and fair, and that the specific problems encountered did not have a significant bearing on the outcome. However, they draw attention to wider issues of intimidation, prior registration of dubious or ineligible voters, and the now well-documented disinformation campaign orchestrated by South African agents, which may have contributed to SWAPO not gaining the anticipated two-thirds majority. The nature and election campaigns of the various political parties are also well covered in Chapter 6.

This provides a good bridge into the final part of the book, which analyses the election results and their implications. Discussion focuses on party performances in different election districts, seeking to discern the respective parties' social bases and to answer many of the broader questions about the political views of Namibians and the effects of war, intimidation and repressive South African rule that had been raised in earlier chapters. Although there was certainly a considerable degree of ethnic voting, especially for some of the smaller, regionally based parties, this clearly did not explain the overall picture and would be a misleading oversimplification. As the authors conclude (p 195):

One lesson that can be taken from an analysis of the election successes and failures is that in future Namibian elections any party that simply seeks to build support by appeals through community leaders or appeals to ethnic labels is unlikely to be sufficiently successful. The electorate in 1989 demonstrated a greater degree of political sophistication in using democratic procedures.

The concluding chapter offers a substantive look at the immediate post-election period, highlighting the work of the Constituent Assembly and its Standing Committee on Rules and Orders, which negotiated the independence Constitution in camera. This fascinating discussion, based largely on the confidential minutes of the Committee's meetings, devotes attention to the mechanisms and procedures, but also highlights the remarkably conciliatory manner in which sensitive or contested issues were addressed. This achieved a high degree of consensus among the parties represented, enabling formal adoption by the Assembly and the attainment of independence as scheduled on 21 March 1990. The sceptical reader might be tempted to look for rose-tinted spectacles here. However, my own experience, discussions with people involved and readings of some of the Committee's minutes confirms the accuracy of this account.

The final few pages of the text seek to summarise early post-independence policy initiatives. This is too brief and reads rather like an afterthought felt necessary by the march of time. The idea is good, but it is not altogether convincing. There are several minor inaccuracies, the most significant of which is the claim (p 234) that SWAPO was constrained after independence by factors including '... an economic stranglehold and occupation of Walvis Bay'. In fact, one of the unexpected surprises of the changing geopolitical situation in southern Africa was that South Africa did not use its presence in Walvis Bay as a thumb on Namibia's jugular vein, as had been widely anticipated, not least by myself. Instead, bilateral negotiations over the port enclave's future proceeded quietly, albeit with some South African obfuscation and delay, with no restriction on Namibian access to and use of the port. On 1 March 1994, Walvis Bay was reintegrated into Namibia.

Such details aside, this valuable addition to the literature on Namibia is completed by several appendices containing UN documents relevant to the transition, and details of the election results and associated analyses. Production of the book is marred only by the rather frequent misspelling of the names of Namibian people and places. Finally, it has to be said that, since the book is published in hardback only, extremely few Namibians will be able to afford it and thus benefit from these insights into a crucial stage in their country's history.

DAVID SIMON

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Guatemalan Politics: the Popular Struggle for Democracy

ROBERT H TRUDEAU, 1993

Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner

In 1985, after massive levels of state violence against the civilian population, the Guatemalan army allowed the first civilian elections in 20 years. *Guatemalan Politics* evaluates the possibilities for democracy during the civilian presidencies of Christian Democrat Vinicio Cerezo (1986–1991) and neo-liberal independent Jorge Serrano Elias (1991–1993).

When one civilian presidency succeeds another, it might be assumed that democracy and peace have returned to a country. Yet Trudeau notes that, while democratic institutions and formal constitutional procedures are mostly in place in Guatemala, democracy does not exist merely by the fact of civilian elections. Instead, it depends upon the creation of a democratic political culture through the cessation of political violence and a definable movement towards social justice.

Guatemalan Politics offers a thorough review of the candidates and electoral processes of the two civilian elections of the late 1980s. Though these elections were procedurally correct, they took place in an atmosphere of military and paramilitary intimidation. No single candidate was willing to challenge either the social inequalities based upon the most skewed land tenure system in Latin America, or the continued militarisation of society.

One of the book's more original contributions is its assessment of the two civilian regimes' fiscal and economic growth policies in the context of neo-liberalism and IMF strictures. Although the late 1980s saw some growth in non-traditional exports and pre-fabricated *maquiladora* industries, poverty increased to a point where 87% of Guatemalans now cannot meet basic needs.

Trudeau gives great importance to public policy and the degree of popular participation in his assessment of Guatemalan democracy. After the election of Vinicio Cerezo, popular organisations used the 'democratic opening' to mobilise direct pressure on civilian regimes for economic and political demands, such as a negotiated settlement to the ongoing 30-year war. Yet human rights

abuses began to escalate once again in the first part of the Cerezo administration because of persistent military dominance and continued political violence against the unarmed opposition.

Trudeau emphasises that civilian governments have benefited Guatemalan democracy by allowing greater opportunity for the development of civil society. He accepts the possibility 'that though elections themselves do not signify democracy, they occasion the opportunity for democracy to be created' (p 187). Although elites may have intended for civilian democracy to be a facade, new institutional structures gave more room for the popular sector to re-organise itself and gain international recognition after the violence of the early 1980s.

Guatemalan Politics ends with a realist assessment of the political future of Guatemala, but indicates that the popular movement—women's groups and Maya cultural organisations—is the only sector seeking to widen the aperture for the political participation of the majority of Guatemalans.

My only major criticism is that the book does not give enough emphasis to the way in which civilian regimes were originally planned as part of an overall army counter-insurgency programme. This strategy granted formal responsibility to civilians, while leaving the military in ultimate control of many important dimensions of state power, including the counter-insurgency war, a number of government development initiatives, the judiciary and the prosecution of human rights violators.

This book will serve as a good resource for all, since it provides a comprehensive, thorough, and meticulously referenced review of the period. It would also be a good introduction for those approaching Guatemalan politics for the first time. The style is solid and straightforward, but also rather dry at times, and the author could have afforded to include more first-hand interviews and observational descriptions to bring the material alive.

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The Long Peace: Ottoman Lebanon, 1861–1920

ENGİN DENİZ AKARLI, 1993

London: IB Tauris Centre for Lebanese Studies
pp 276

Systematic research into the central Ottoman archives located in Istanbul is continually providing the basis for new interpretations of Ottoman history. In this pioneering work, Engin Akarli utilises the voluminous records on Ottoman Lebanon to shed new light on the comparatively long peace maintained there between the civil war of 1860 and the establishment of the French Mandate in 1920.

The book is divided into two sections; the first treats the political history of the special administrative regime (or *mutasarrifate*) established in Mount Lebanon in 1861, while the second considers the development of its institutions and their contribution to the creation of modern Lebanon.

As Akarli demonstrates, the success of the *mutasarrifate* is attributable not to the limitations which were placed upon Ottoman sovereignty by the European powers, but rather to the integrative policies pursued by Istanbul and its local governors in order to remove the basis for further foreign intervention. He persuasively argues that the *mutasarrifate* fostered autonomous institutions and inter-confessional relationships which collectively evolved into a viable alternative to the sectarian forces permeating Lebanese society. It was, additionally, in this laboratory of secular self-government that the liberal vision of Lebanese identity and politics which triumphed during the French Mandate was first practised.

The key institution of the *mutasarrifate* was the Administrative Council, which derived its power from its control of taxation and budgetary expenditures. Akarli shows that while this body was confessional in composition, it was not sectarian in operation. Elections in which village headmen representing various sects were obliged to select minority councillors, for example, necessitated inter-confessional alliances and thus created common interests. Such relationships, in turn, eventually penetrated the workings of the Council itself. The two occasions on which the Council

had to act as a caretaker administration pending the arrival of a new governor provide an instructive contrast; in 1892 it quickly degenerated into 'petty squabbles', whereas in 1912 'the Council ran the Mountain—and smoothly too' for a period of six months. Similarly, reforms of the court system gradually displaced the practice of sectarian favouritism with a system of inter-confessional consensus based on a single rule of law.

During the mutasarrifate, furthermore, three distinct political forces came into being: 'conservatives', who continued to pursue their interests through sectarian politics; the 'government party', whose power derived from the patronage of Istanbul and its local representatives; and the 'liberal party', which like the conservatives was formed by service in the mutasarrifate's institutions but sought to exercise unimpeded control over them.

Although the Maronite establishment was the most visible conservative force, Akarli suggests that its influence would have been significantly less were it not for determined French patronage. And while the ideals of the liberals were to a significant extent borrowed from the French Revolution ('justice, equality and freedom of commerce') and generally anathema to the Ottomans, it was the latter who provided them with their institutional base, whereas the French sought to curtail them in order to preserve the authority of the Maronite clergy over its peasantry.

Once Istanbul had managed to convert the mutasarrifate from a humiliating concession to foreign interests to a local manifestation of its own sovereignty, it increasingly gave way to the autonomous institutions it had initially encouraged to bolster its own position. This was not the result of a conscious policy, and in many ways an involuntary process. Rather, it demonstrated that a specifically Lebanese political community—led by the liberal faction—had emerged.

Thus it was that a regime established to limit Ottoman sovereignty and enhance foreign influence provided the Ottoman state with the means to extend its authority over Mount Lebanon for perhaps the first time. That this process was marked by stability rather than strife demonstrates the efficacy of the policies pursued by the Sublime Porte. Indeed, the ultimate demise of the mutasarrifate occurred not as a result of any irresolvable internal contradictions of the regime but rather on account of easily identifiable external factors. Akarli concludes that by providing Lebanon with the experience of organising and conducting 'governmental activity within a constitutional framework' and 'a common, and democratically oriented, political consciousness', the idea of Lebanon, unlike many other postcolonial nationalisms 'was not an intellectual construct alone, but was rooted in fifty-odd years of political experience in building and actual territorial government'. Akarli, who challenges a number of conventional assumptions about Ottoman history, has written an important book and written it well.

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A History of Indian Economic Thought

AJIT DASGUPTA, 1993
London: Routledge
206 pp

India is often described as a country of great diversity. As this book brings out, diversity is certainly a striking characteristic of Indian economic thought. The controversies of classical economists about the Corn Laws, or contemporary debates between Keynesians and monetarists, seem relatively trivial in comparison with the gulf that separates, say, Gandhi from Mahalanobis. This book presents a helpful and enjoyable introduction to the remarkably diverse contributions of Indian thinkers to the discipline of economics.

The focus of most of the book is perhaps more accurately described as 'Indian thoughts on the Indian economy' rather than as Indian economic thought *tout court*. In particular, the reader will not find any discussion of the formidable contribution of modern Indian economists to general economic theory. Even with this explicitly restricted focus, the author has had to be selective. Aside from the introduction, the book consists of nine chapters, covering nine distinct themes in chronological order: Buddhism and economics; Kautilya's economics; economic thought in the Muslim period; famine analyses in the 19th century; the drain theory; Ranade's contribution to development economics; economic issues of the independence movement; Gandhian economics; and post-independence debates. This thematic selection obviously leaves large gaps as far as a comprehensive history of

Indian economic thought is concerned, but it provides an insightful sample of landmark issues and influential authors. And while the coverage of different themes is highly selective, their treatment is based on a broad view of what economics is about. The author—following Buddha, Kautilya and Gandhi—has refrained from the temptation of isolating economics from politics, law or ethics.

On each of the selected themes, the author provides a lucid exposition of the issues and arguments. The Buddhist attitude to economic enterprise, Kautilya's view of the economic functions of the state, the foundations of the drain theory, the Mahalanobis model of economic growth and other topics are discussed with equal clarity and concision. The presentation of a particular argument is often accompanied by a helpful critique. It is only in the chapter on Gandhi that critical evaluation is conspicuous by its absence.

Many readers will regret the small amount of space given in this book to post-independence Indian economists (not only theorists, whose work is deliberately excluded, but also applied economists). While the chapters on Ranade and Gandhi cover one third of the book, the post-independence period gets less than half of that, and many of the towering figures of post-independence Indian economic thought receive only passing mention, if any. But we should not forget the well-known rule according to which an author should not be blamed for failing to say something which he said he would not say.

JEAN DREZE

Dellu School of Economics

Arguing with the Crocodile: Gender and Class in Bangladesh

SARAH C WHITE, 1992

London: Zed Books

186 pp

In presenting a sense of 'the situation of women in Bangladesh', Sarah C White of Bath University, UK exposes the weaknesses noted in the existing methodology, which has presented the women's rights issue from the observers' coloured viewpoints. With adequate data collected from the rural areas of Bangladesh, Dr White offers five case studies in eight chapters to argue that the centrality of the feminist perspectives should be emphasised in order to restore flexibility to studies of women in Bangladesh. Of course, as she admits, such discourse with women to identify women's status may not be detached.

White, who stayed with the Bengalis, describes the composition of the village community; the recent trends toward small businesses and involvement of women in market transactions; marriage practices (Hindu and Muslim) and kin based linkages; and women's work, rights and responsibilities in the households, the agricultural land and weekly or bi-weekly *hats* (markets).

Essentially, four significant aspects of women's position in Bangladesh have been verified. First, the author submits that modernisation of the rural economy has enhanced women's position since 1972. As the external and agencies successfully introduced mechanised farming and irrigation, more rice, wheat, mustard seeds, potatoes and onions were grown to the satisfaction of all villagers in Kumirpur in Rajshahi district. There was now a close interrelation between male and female activity in all markets with adequate produce. While Sukhi wanted to buy her neighbour's heifer, her husband Dhiren consented, and the heifer came into their yard next day. Likewise, another woman, Asha—not her old father—hired agricultural labourers to work their shared land. Women thus demonstrated their assumed power. Moreover, as the donors of aid and native social reformers wished, poor women demonstrated business entrepreneurship to alleviate their poverty. Unlike the women in neighboring West Bengal, women in Kumirpur village were relatively more engaged in market transactions.

Second, women expressed their authority in household affairs as well. On their own authority, women could give loans of common household resources. They now could lend money on their own and this helped them to build their own savings of cash. As White testifies, there was a dilemma. Poor women labourers did not always get adequate remuneration from female employers. These unfortunate women occupied the lowest point of the social pyramid. Here, the author argues, 'subordination by class and gender converge' (p 88). Single women were in a far more desperate situation and more helpless condition. Many of them were engaged in domestic service, which produced only inequalities. Third, as before, in the marriage bond the Bengali Muslim women

symbolised female subordination. Although early marriage fulfilled their advancement and hope of a better life, new wives were also new workers and as such their labour, sexuality and fertility belonged to their husband and his family, according to tradition and social norms. Dowry (payment by the bride's family) represented a situation in which women did no 'productive' labour, and so represented a future 'cost' for which their husband's household must be compensated. The position was not different from the Hindu practices. In short, through marriage, 'women in Bangladesh come closest to the feminine ideal of subordination and dependence' (p 109). In the 'family household', male activities were regarded as 'primary' and female as only 'secondary'. For instance, one daughter-in-law of Kangali Serkar, a wealthy Hindu, used the family sewing machine to mend clothes of other household members during the day, but she could only use the sewing machine for her own clothes without being rebuked when all the housework was done to the satisfaction of other members. This tendency, the author contends, supported the traditional norms of Bengali society. The income which a woman could generate was eventually used in the service of the household as a whole. Dr White insists that women themselves identified their own interests with the advancement of the household as a whole. They thus remained adult dependents, to the annoyance of social reformers.

Lastly, in the political field, Bengali women were at times involved in resistance during the Tebhaga (share-cropping in three parts) peasant uprising in 1946-47. But typically, women were mainly active in politics behind the scene. The Islamic Fundamentalists supported the veil (purdah) by all means, arguing that women's seclusion and chastity was in the interest of the community, or national integrity. When two women activists were supposed to be officials in the Family Planning network in the north of Kumirpur, the Union Chairman warned that he could not guarantee their safety. Whereas in India men and women were parts of wider ascriptive social and perhaps political units in the 1980s, women in Bangladesh had a long way to go, concludes the author.

The book has some deficiencies. First, some sub-titles are not very clear. For instance, chapter four bears a title 'Scatter with One Hand: Gather with Two', which implies that if one gives away something, or invests, s/he has the moral right to demand some share in the produce. In this chapter, Dr White argues that the male factor dominated the major markets. But the question remains: did the male factor dominate the households because of their market domination? Did the males have a moral right to dictate terms? All through the chapter, Dr White fails to explain the implication of the saying. Likewise, the title in chapter seven, 'You can't Get Ghee Out with a Straight Figure', means in Bengali that one must be courageous enough to demand his or her rights. Here again, there has been no attempt to put forward the women's demands, or explain the sub-heading. This brings us to another adverse observation on the book. We know that a movement interacts with the state and with society. In evaluating the possible outcomes of the Bangladeshi women's movement, one question has to concern what groups oppose its goals, and what are their relative strengths. Similarly, it is necessary to ask two questions about the state and the elders: what incentives and what capacity did they have to respond effectively to the women's demands? In the sub-heading, 'Gender and the Bangladeshi state', Dr White notes that the Bangladeshi state's approach to gender has been opportunistic and contradictory (p 13), but she does not explain the moral assumptions of the state. Nor does she explain who did oppose the women's advances and why.

However, this original piece of work substantiates the line of argument that women, both Hindu and Muslim, in that poor country have made progress in attaining some rights. The text has provided the readers with feminist perspectives, which called for new demands. If the foreign donor agencies have already explained the traditionally accepted norms, the present book has offered more sociological explanations. In this respect the book is a clear contribution to the literature on social stratification by gender and class in a Third World country.

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Economic Graffiti: Essays for Everyone

KAUSHIK BASU, 1991

Bombay: Oxford University Press

209 pp, Rs 75

This book is a compilation of short essays originally written for a regular column in the popular Indian daily, the *Indian Express*, between 1982 and 1988. The book contains 60 such pieces, divided into

six sections, which 'violates the chronology of their original appearance to form some thematic clusters' (p 3). The emphasis should be on 'cluster' rather than 'theme', however, since each section contains topics that are quite wide ranging. The problems that such a format poses for the reviewer are readily apparent; my solution will be to discuss one or two essays from each section, with the choice being made on the basis of representativeness, policy importance and an element of subjective personal preference.

The first section is almost biographical, and deals with economists and opinions. It consists of 12 essays, ranging from a delightful piece on the many faces of Maynard Keynes and JK Galbraith on power to the contributions of some recent winners of the Nobel Prize in Economics. A number of these essays deal with methodological issues in economics, as do the essays in Section 6. Section 6 contains three essays that are much longer than the others, a feature reflecting the fact that they were originally published as journal articles. The piece on 'Economic theory in development economics' canvasses a number of issues regarding the role that theory should play in this literature.

In discussing methodology and the role of theory in economics, it has become a ritual to disclose one's view with respect to the encroachment of the discipline by the mathematical and statistical sciences. I share Basu's view that the 'intrusion' has yielded more positives than negatives, particularly with respect to re-equipping and improving the economist's tool-kit. In this respect, 'On misunderstanding Debreu' in Section 1 provides a lucid defence of the modelling approach that has come to dominate much of current economic analysis. Debreu's major contributions are in the area of general equilibrium theory, an analytically demanding subject. For this reason, it has not been accessible to many inside the discipline, let alone outside. Unfortunately, ignorance alone has not been a sufficient reason in preventing many insiders and outsiders from misrepresenting his work and its relevance.

This is illustrated by the following quote from the popular magazine, *The Economist* (22–28 October 1983): 'Mr Debreu's great achievement was to work out a set of conditions under which a perfect market would exist. The snag is that these conditions are not matched in reality. No reasonably realistic set has yet been derived'. Fine, but why is this a 'snag'? If you do not define the conditions under which a perfect market could exist, what then does it mean to say that a market is 'imperfect'? Furthermore, as Basu correctly points out, this is precisely the engaging aspect of general equilibrium theory. It demonstrates that the popular view that the free market works efficiently is a fragile theorem, balanced on a number of fairly unrealistic assumptions. The works of both Debreu and Kenneth Arrow provided the basis for the more recent developments in the analysis of economies with sticky prices and markets with oversupply or shortage problems. It also contributed to the development of applied or computable general equilibrium models, which have been used extensively in the analysis of a myriad of policy issues in the developing and developed economies.¹

Section 2 is entitled 'Indian concerns', although most of the essays deal with problems commonly faced by other developing countries. Basu's piece on 'Should the auto industry be protected?' exemplifies what must be one of the touchstones of professionalism in economics these days: the view that protection simply does not work. The arguments against protection are continued in 'The budget': a critique of its rationale' in Section 3, and I shall discuss these sections jointly.

In terms of all indicators, except perhaps the number of pedestrians killed in road accidents annually, India's motor vehicle industry is a small one. Given its size and small contribution to GNP, the question arises as to whether such an industry should receive preferential treatment, especially when the cost of such protection is borne by consumers and, indirectly, by exporters.² Protectionists are keen to taunt 'infant industry' and 'positive spill-over effects' arguments, often ignoring the fact that the grounds for the former have usually been negated by the duration that the protection has been in place, and the latter by the extent of the protection sought and often received. If there is to be an argument on the grounds of national security, then surely 'stock-piling' would be a more efficient means of achieving these ends. The free-trade exponent seems to be equipped with an infinitely elastic supply of arguments to counter those of the protectionist's, and to advance in support of his own case. A favourite is the one that tells of unbridled inefficiencies and lack of quality-control that results from limiting competition. Basu relays a common joke in Hindi about Maruthi's Ambassador car: *Horn chhorkar sab bagta* —everything, apart from the horn, makes a sound. Protection is not the way forward for the developing world, and particularly not at the levels that currently distort the allocation of productive resources.

Section 5 is entitled 'Beyond the boundaries', and not only exceeds national boundaries, but also

the most liberal confines that one could expect to be placed on a 'thematic cluster'. As the most eclectic section of the book, it is impossible to discuss one, two or even five of the 13 essays and feel satisfied in having communicated the 'theme' of this section. For this reason, I will focus on one essay that I think will be of interest to readers of this journal. The 'Lessons from Asia's super exporters' is all about the economic miracles of Taiwan and South Korea, emerging from their overpopulated and underdeveloped status of the 1960s to their current position as economic giants. Here we have a re-statement of the now-familiar 'trade as an engine of growth' argument.³

A less familiar tune played out in this piece is the idea that the move into producing and exporting the 'new' labour-intensive manufactures need not, and in fact did not, occur at the expense of agricultural export development in Taiwan and South Korea. In other words, these are not necessarily policy choices, but can play important complementary roles in fuelling economic growth and promoting overall export performance. It is surprising, however, that Basu should confine this phenomenon to the experience of these two countries, as a number of the ASEAN countries, Malaysia and Thailand in particular, are perhaps better examples. Had the experience of these countries been considered, some further insights could have been gleaned. The experience of Malaysia and Thailand suggests that if 'diversification' is contemplated, then it should not be out of agriculture altogether and into manufacturing, but rather manufacturing plus diversification within agriculture. The move into oil palm and high-yielding varieties of rubber in Malaysia, and diversification into new export crops such as maize and sugar in Thailand, are clear-cut examples of the important complementary role that agriculture can play if it is responsive to changing world market conditions.⁴

The experience of these countries also flies in the face of the long-standing primary-export pessimism – the view that export prospects for agricultural products are determined predominantly by the long-term pattern of world demand, leaving little room for supply-side policies to achieve export success. It also rejects the view, particularly influential in the early postwar years, that the primary export sector should be altogether dismissed in favour of manufacturing, because the former would have unfavourable effects on the structure and long-run productive efficiency of the domestic economy.⁵

Basu correctly dismisses the tendency to uphold the Asian experience as proof of the virtues of governmental non-interference. There is an interesting discussion of the influence of government in the Korean banking system, and the complex differential interest rate system used to channel investments into chosen sectors. He is careful, however, not to extend this involvement to include trade protection.

I am not someone who likes using labels, but if pushed, I think Basu would fit into a category best described as 'wet' neoclassicism (or neoclassicism with a conscience?). This book would certainly appeal to the true believers of the neoclassical faith, but there is something in it for the non-believers too. There are occasions when Basu comes across a bit like the proverbial 'believing sceptic', but these are rare. Basu is adventurous, perhaps even courageous, in attempting to argue his case on a myriad of thorny issues currently facing many developing countries. In fact, the book is designed to engage and irritate even the most sombre among us into thinking about the many economic problems currently facing the developing world, as exemplified by the Indian experience.

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A F R I C A in the W O R L D

The 1945
Pan-African Congress
and its Aftermath

Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration and Conference
October 13th to 15th, 1995

The Fifth Pan-African Congress held in Manchester in 1945 inspired many African and Caribbean leaders in their struggle for independence and became a pace-maker for decolonization in Africa and the West Indies. An international civic celebration marking the fiftieth anniversary of that Congress will include performances of African plays and music, arts exhibitions and a wide range of cultural and educational activities and distinguished public lectures.

Pan-African Directions, an international conference will be held at the Manchester Town Hall from October 13th to 15th, 1995. Historians, sociologists, political scientists and political activists will come together to take stock of current debate on some of the Fifth Congress's themes and related issues that are still very relevant today. The importance of Manchester's black community in organising the Congress will be particularly marked, with some of the 1945 participants joining the discussion.

Planned formal sessions are:

The 1945 Pan-African Congress

Pan-Africanism and Liberation Movements

The forging of a black politics in Britain, Europe and the United States

Women in the Struggle

Trade Unions

Pan-Africanism approaching the Twenty-first Century

Africa at the Close of the Twentieth Century

Among the participants will be Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem of the Pan-African Movement, A. Sivanandan of the Institute of Race Relations, Wole Soyinka (subject to final confirmation), William Abraham, Abdul Alkalimat, Bankie Foster Bankie, Manning Marable, Erroll MacLeod, Victoria Brittain of The Guardian, S Q Nunoo Quaye of the Ghana TUC, Immanuel Geiss, Colin Legum and many others from Africa, the Caribbean, Europe and America.

In order to ensure that the Conference is as open as possible, particular emphasis will be placed on providing opportunities for more informal discussion, debate and exchange of views.



To take part in **Pan-African Directions** in any way, however active, promote any other relevant activity, or simply to attend, contact the Co-Ordinator.

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A F R I C A i n t h e W O R L D

Peasant flood in China: internal migration and its policy determinants

GUANG HUA WAN

In China, there are at least 50 million long-term migrants and a much larger volume of temporary counterparts who originated from the countryside, among which more than 20 million are inter-provincial movers.¹ The latest information indicates that in 1993 there were 100 million or more short-term migrants in China.² For some time now, peasant-related migration, or the 'peasant flood' as it is termed in China, has given rise to a number of social and economic issues new to the country. Leaving economic implications aside (see Sahota for a summary),³ the huge volumes of temporary as well as long-term migrants have led to infrastructure, moral, security, family planning and other social and political problems throughout the nation. These problems attract a lot of attention from the government, the mass media and society at large.⁴ Given the severity of the problems and the fact that this unstoppable migration process will inevitably accelerate as modernisation and industrialisation proceed, studies on internal migration in China, which are currently lacking, will be of the utmost urgency and importance, particularly for socioeconomic policy making and implementation.

Unlike many other less developed countries (LDCs), where rural-urban migration dominates the scene (see Nam, Serow and Sly and case studies therein⁵), significant inter-sectoral migration within small localities, or intra-township migration, has been a unique feature of the Chinese modernisation process. This inter-sectoral migration, which overwhelmingly depends on the growth of local industrial enterprises in various forms, has important implications for the urbanisation path in China and for the restructuring of the national economy as well as for the flow of resources. Any studies on Chinese population movement that do not consider the intra-township migration are incomplete, to say the least. On the other hand, inter- and intra-urban migration is relatively small because of the regulatory nature of the urban labour market coupled with the rigid wage, education, housing, medicare and other welfare systems. Thus, we leave inter- and intra-urban migration aside in this paper. This omission is also attributable to data unavailability.

Our focus on rural-rural, rural-urban and urban-rural migration can be further justified on the grounds that some 84% of the 1172 million Chinese population are rural residents and about 150 to 200 million rural labourers are in surplus in China.⁶ Conversely, there are at least 3 million urban youth workers in the rural areas and the urban-rural migration trend is increasing.⁷ Therefore, it is far more important to study rural-related migration. As economic reform deepens, the rural surplus human resource not only moves out of agriculture and enters non-traditional activities within localities (so-called *liu bu lixiang*—leaving

land but not townships), it also penetrates tightly controlled urban labour markets and flows to distant rural and non-rural areas (so called *litu you lixiang*—leaving land as well as townships). Although the former has long been encouraged by the central government as a strategy of controlling the urban population explosion, the latter was rather unexpected with respect to its pace, scale and consequences.⁸

Briefly, the cause of the peasant-flood is recent economic reform and the associated social changes which have initiated and stimulated large-scale internal migration. Among other things, the abolition of the grain procurement system and gradual removal of the state monopoly over the grain trade has provided sufficient conditions for internal migration. Conversely, beyond the usual benefits of labour mobility as predicted by economic theory, migration does promote economic reform in the sense that the presence of migrants may provide the prerequisite for deregulating the urban labour market and instituting needed reform in industrial relations in the state enterprises. In addition, the emerging urban-rural (vs rural-urban) migration exerts pressure on the government and appropriate management to reform the state-owned segment of the economy if they wish to have some control over the outflows of the highly educated and skilled workers from the formal sector. As often reported in the media,⁹ migrants also help transmit useful market information, disseminate technologies and bring both physical and human capital into the countryside, all of which are rather lacking but vital to the development of the rural economy.

Based on a set of micro-level survey data, this paper, one of the first of its kind, aims at revealing and discussing the facts and patterns of internal migration in China. Cross-country comparisons will be made when appropriate. It will become clear that many features of the Chinese case are unique, and some may be surprising. In particular, rural-rural migration is found to be positively related to distance while out- and net migration is negatively related to education. Female participation in migration is found to be extremely low and the tails of the age distribution of migrants are remarkably thin. Considerable effort will be devoted to the explanation of the major findings, though our ability to do so is limited in some instances because of the absence of relevant literature and data. Nevertheless, the information provided and the characteristics discovered regarding internal migration in China are useful in their own right, especially for comparative and further studies in this area.

The 1986 survey

The survey, undertaken by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in conjunction with relevant government authorities, was intended to discover the composition and patterns of rural population movement. To obtain meaningful information on intra-township migration, it was necessary to conduct the survey at a village level. The village (formerly called a production brigade) is an institutional unit right below the township (formerly called a commune) but above the production team, which is now virtually non-existent after the implementation of the family-based production responsibility system. Because of the enormous number of villages in China and the limited research resources

available to the Academy, random sampling, which requires a substantial number of villages to be drawn in order to maintain its usefulness, was not employed. Instead a stratified survey procedure was adopted, which involved (i) choosing the representative provinces, autonomous regions or metropolitan cities (for convenience, they will all be referred to as regions hereafter); (ii) choosing representative counties within each representative region, and (iii) choosing representative villages within each representative county. Here, 'representativeness' is measured in terms of both development status and geographic location of the sampling population. A total of 230 villages was selected from 84 townships in 59 counties, scattered across the following 11 regions: Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, Helongjiang, Guangxi, Hebei, Shanxi, Le munggu, Ningxia and Qinghai. Information from eight villages was found to be incomplete by the surveyors, thus what will be used in this paper are data for 222 villages.

The survey documented 1986 population movement statistics through extensive interviews and record checking. Population flows were classified into three categories: (1) intra-migration or intraflow, which involves those who migrated within the boundary of their own townships; (2) out-migration, emigration or outflow, which involves those who left their townships; and (3) in-migration, immigration or inflow which involves those who moved into the 222 villages from outside the respective townships. To be counted as a migrant, an individual must have stayed in the new position or location for 30 days or more. Those who migrated for less than a year were classified as temporary, short-term or seasonal migrants; otherwise, they were referred to as long-term or permanent migrants. Age, sex, education, postmigration occupation and duration of stay (30–60 days, 61–180 days, 181–365 days, a year or more) details were obtained for every migrant. Origins for in-migrants and destinations for out-migrants were also recorded. Because relocation usually does not occur for within-township movers, no destination-origin information was gathered for the intra-migrants.

To show how representative the survey data are, Yu computed correlation coefficients between national totals and the aggregates from the surveyed villages for these variables (correlation coefficient in parentheses): agricultural labour force (0.98), rural GDP (0.98), per capita income (0.91) and number of labourers transferred out of agriculture (0.95). The high correlation coefficients indicate that drawing inferences from the survey data can be justified.¹⁰

Extent of migration

Based on the survey data, some 43 223 persons were involved in intraflows and 26 993 emigrated from the surveyed townships in 1986. The sum of 70 216 represents 37.15% of the corresponding labour force. Those who entered large cities accounted for 3.8% of the emigrants or 1.46% of the total migrants from the 222 villages (= intra-movers + emigrants). Meanwhile, 7793 persons immigrated into the surveyed villages, some 10% of whom were non-rural residents. This pattern is clearly in contrast with those experienced by most other developing countries, where the majority of rural migrants rush to big cities. The

self-initiated emigration signifies the end of the long-standing tradition of living on the land. Although small in percentage terms, the impact of such a change in peasant ideology and behaviour on the social and economic system is far-reaching. For example, the population is no longer made of two distinct and geographically separated classes: the peasant class and the worker class (the leading class). A person can no longer be classified as a rural peasant (second grade citizen) or a city resident by his/her place of birth. In other words, the politically-enforced boundaries between urban and rural economies are disappearing. A national integrated labour market is being formed.¹¹

Distance and migration

Contrary to earlier findings,¹² the volume of internal migration in China seems positively related to the distance between the origins and destinations of migrants, at least in the case of rural-rural and urban-rural migration. This phenomenon is believed to be attributable to the structural unemployment problem and unbalanced resource bases across rural China. For a detailed analysis, see the section on destinations of migrants in this paper.

Gender composition of migrants

Among the 70 216 migrants, about 74% were males and only 26% were females. This composition shows a remarkably low female participation in internal migration in China. Elsewhere, about half of the migrants are usually females. For example, in India females accounted for 69% of internal migration in the 1960s and 1970s. This percentage went up to 70.5% in 1981.¹³ Even in Israel,¹⁴ Botswana,¹⁵ the Netherlands¹⁶ and Egypt,¹⁷ female migrants more or less matched their male counterparts. Reasons for the low female-male migrant ratio in China will be discussed later.

Occupations of migrants

The survey revealed that over 57.38% of the migrants from the 222 villages shifted into industrial (34.31%) and construction (23.07%) activities. The service sector (food providers, stall holders, door-to-door retailers, barbers, small shops and the like) attracted 9.73%. There were only 565 who engaged in cropping and 1614 in forestry, animal husbandry, sideline production and fishery. Adding them up, this group accounted for a negligible 3.11% of the total migrants from the surveyed villages. It is clear that internal migration in China exclusively involves people moving out of traditional activities. For comparison, in Egypt in 1976, 12.8% of active migrants were participating in primary activities, 8.1% in construction, 21.4% in industrial activities and 12.5% in service industries.¹⁸ In Botswana at least 15.8% of total migrants were working as primary producers.¹⁹

Age structure of migrants

Breaking down the data into age groups, 2.4% of migrants (1688 heads) were

TABLE I
**Age composition of Intraflow
 and outflow migrants, 1986**

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Migrants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Below 18	1 688	2.40
18-35	39 322	56.00
36-45	22 207	31.63
46-55	5 860	8.35
Over 55	1 139	1.62
Total	70 216	100.00

aged 17 or under, nearly 88% (61 530) were aged between 18 and 45 and the remaining 9.9% (6999) were 46 and over (see Table I). This pattern is broadly consistent with that of Kenya,²⁰ Egypt²¹ and Japan.²² However, the tails of the age distribution are quite thin compared with those of the above-mentioned less developed countries and undoubtedly much thinner than those of developed countries. This reflects the nature of the Chinese case, where almost all migrants are essentially labourers. Family migration is rather uncommon in China. Hence, the terms of labour movement/mobility and internal migration can be used interchangeably in the case of China.

Short-term vs permanent migration

In 1986, seasonal migrants accounted for some 80% of the total emigrants from the surveyed villages. The corresponding figure for immigrants was 47%, significantly lower. Taking migrants and immigrants as a whole, the majority were temporary or seasonal movers. This pattern has mainly resulted from the underdevelopment or absence of an urban labour market, from a shortage of social services for migrants and the lack of an appropriate migration policy.

Education and migration

A surprising discovery is that education did not play a significant role in promoting migration in the mid-1980s in China. Table II indicates that the percentage in total migration for each education class more or less equalled its share in the total labour force. Rounding to two decimal points, 39% of the labour force received primary education and the same percentage of the out-migrants were primary school leavers. This result contradicts most previous theoretical and empirical findings, irrespective of the development status of the nations under study.²³ A thorough exposition of the relationship between education and internal migration in China is provided below.

TABLE II
**Compositions of rural labour force and
 migrants (surveyed villages) by
 education levels, 1986**

<i>Education level</i>	<i>Labour force</i>	<i>Migrants</i>
High school	8.35	8.85
Middle school	25.16	26.37
Primary school	38.62	39.40
Semi illiterate and illiterate	27.71	25.25
Total	100.00	100.00

Discussion

Education and internal migration: are they related?

Herrick,²⁴ Levy and Wadycki,²⁵ Schwartz²⁶ and King,²⁷ among many others, concluded that education is positively related to migration. The argument behind such a conclusion is that the more educated are better informed about employment opportunities. Essentially, this is also what human capital migration models would predict.

What then do the Chinese data tell us? Using the 1986 year-beginning labour force as the base, rates of internal migration by education levels are computed and presented in Table III. Among those who had received tertiary education, 11.07% migrated from the 222 townships. The percentage was slightly higher for middle (11.88%) and high (11.94%) school leavers. It increased to 13.19% for primary school leavers and rose to 16.52% for the semi-illiterate and illiterate members of the labour force. Without attaching any statistical significance, the Chinese evidence is exactly contrary to previous findings. That is, education is inversely related to migration.

On the other hand, there was a positive connection between education and intra-migration if the first group (tertiary and above) is excluded from consideration (column 3 of Table 3). Also, unlike the case of out-migration, the intra-migration rates for middle and high school leavers are clearly different. This pattern, however, does not necessarily lend support to human capital migration models, as information on employment opportunities within a township are largely transmitted through person-to-person communication (which can be quite effective), in which case the educated are not really in a more advantageous position than others.

The most influential causes underlying the seemingly contradictory results, in the author's view, are the profound effects of reverse selectivity bias and the structural unemployment problem in China. In other words, it is not who chooses to migrate but who is in demand as migrant labour that matters most. It will become clear later that over 50% of the out-migrants have entered non-rural or urban areas (which include rural towns, county-level towns and cities of various sizes) where low skill labourers are in large demand. On the other hand, rural

TABLE III
Rates of internal migration, by
education levels, 1986

<i>Education level</i>	<i>Outflow</i>	<i>Intraflow</i>
Tertiary and above	11.07	19.72
High School	11.94	27.20
Middle school	11.88	26.40
Primary school	13.19	23.17
Semi-illiterate and illiterate	16.52	15.06
Overall	15.16	24.27

Labour force is used as the base in calculations because of the unavailability of population data. Inflow rates cannot be calculated because composition of in-migrants by education levels is unavailable.

development now requires a better educated and skilled labour force than is available. Sweeping economic reforms have introduced market forces into the production, consumption, and marketing processes of individuals, households and various institutions in the rural areas. Thus, economic life there is no longer so routine. In particular, decision makers in non-urban areas not only face all kinds of risks but also have to bear the consequences of their decisions. All these need intellectual inputs into the multi-dimensional management system and basic operation of rural firms. It is in this sense that we can conclude that the unemployment problem in rural China is essentially a structural one. This explains the relatively high out-migration but low intra-migration rates for the less educated and the low out-migration but high intra-migration rates for the better educated. Since opportunities for the most qualified, who typically only accept secured and prestigious jobs, are rather limited in both urban and rural areas, their mobility is somewhat restricted. In fact, the better educated in the rural areas often hold technical, managerial and administrative positions, from which they enjoy an immense amount of respect and privilege. This naturally leads to the negative (positive) education-mobility relationship for emigrants (in-migrants). The reason underlying the clear differentiation between high and middle school leavers for intraflows is also attributable to education being a determinant in rural labour markets, while for outflow, education or skills do not count as much. In short, migration is largely demand-driven in China.

The above observations and arguments imply that the usual urban-pull effect is rather weak, if not absent, in China. Otherwise, urban areas would attract rural labourers from across the board if not favourably biased towards the better educated, regardless of whether or not a structural unemployment problem exists. Clearly, those who have obtained a better education do not appear to be disadvantaged compared to the less educated in the urban labour market. The fact that relatively more of the better educated stayed in the surveyed townships is obviously indicative of weak pull of the urban areas. It seems that the rural

TABLE IV
Net migration from the surveyed villages, by education levels, 1986

<i>Education level</i>	<i>Outflow</i>	<i>Inflow (persons)</i>	<i>Net migration</i>	<i>Rate of net migration (%)</i>
Tertiary and above	32	43	11	- 3.67
High school	1 894	897	997	6.71
Middle school	5 730	2 479	3 251	7.23
Primary school	10 036	2 244	7 792	11.41
Semi illiterate and illiterate	9 301	2 130	7 171	14.59
Total	70 216	7 793	19 200	10.78

Labour force is used as the base in calculating the rates because of the unavailability of population data

sector pushes the uneducated out on the one hand and pulls some of the best educated in on the other hand. The strong pushing effects, together with the structural unemployment problem can also be used to explain the surprising but positive distance-migration relationship, which will be addressed later.

The conclusions regarding reverse selectivity bias, structural unemployment and urban pull and rural-push effects are supported by three other findings: (i) While the net outflow of migrants from the 222 villages was 7171 in 1986, tertiary educated in-migrants actually increased by 11 or 3.67%. The net migration rates increase as education levels decreases (Table IV), which may imply that the less qualified are facing stronger unemployment pressures in rural China; (ii) The inflows were better educated than the outflows. See the compositions of migrants by education levels in Figure 1. For example, nearly 72% of out-migrants only possessed primary education or below—the proportion is about 60% for intra-migrants and only 56% for in-migrants; (iii) Relatively more in-migrants were long-term stayers (see below), reinforcing the conclusion that the better educated are indeed demanded by the rural sector, despite the existence of a great amount of unemployment there.

Recognising the interdependence between growth and development and human capital, the future of the rural economy appears reasonably optimistic. The crucial question is: to what extent can the reverse pull and the lack of urban pull be attributed to the state-ownership nature of and absence of incentives in the urban formal sector? Foreseeing fundamental economic reforms in the state industries, how to sustain human capital inflow into or simply to keep the well educated in the rural areas is a question which must be seriously taken into consideration by policy makers at all levels, particularly by reform architects in China.

Why are females less mobile?

Calculation of sex ratios from the survey data shows that females were relatively

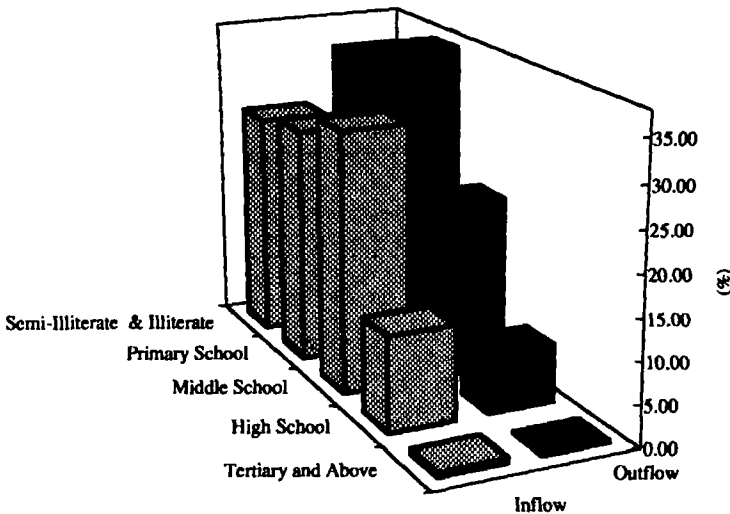


FIGURE 1 Composition of migrants by education levels, 1986.

less mobile irrespective of directions of flow (see Table V). In particular, the male-female ratio of 100:28 for out-migrants is extremely low by international standards. The ratio is slightly higher for intra-migrants (100:36) and even higher for in-migrants (100:59). There are several factors underlying the low mobility of females in China. These factors also contribute to the variations in the ratios among in-, intra- and out-migrants.

First of all, culture and customs are against female migration: virtually all decisions concerning a household or its individual members are made by the elderly and male members of the family. Females are often not allowed to travel far away from home without relatives or family companions, let alone to migrate by themselves. For thousands of years, females have traditionally been associated with housework, including washing, cooking, looking after the children and particularly the elderly. On the other hand, male members of the family (husband, sons, brothers) have been conventionally assigned to work outside. Whenever there is a need or opportunity to migrate, males are usually positioned ahead of females. This explains the across-the-board low female mobility. While these customs and traditions are undergoing changes, the traditional tie between females and housework, and the general acceptance by society and women themselves that females should stand behind the family, are still quite prominent, particularly in the vast poor areas. In the case of intra-migration, where it may not be necessary for females to break ties with their families, the female-male ratio improves. To elaborate, if a woman has children, the elderly or a husband to look after, a job change within her township might be acceptable, but out-of-township positions may not even be considered by such a family. The family tie issue is also reflected by the fact that sex ratios were considerably

TABLE V
**Sex ratios (male:female) of long-term and
 short-term migrants, 1986**

<i>Term</i>	<i>Intraflow</i>	<i>Outflow</i>	<i>Inflow</i>	<i>Overall</i>
Long term	100:44	100:36	100:88	100:47
Short term	100:26	100:26	100:35	100:27
Total	100:36	100:28	100:59	100:35

higher for the long-term migrants for all three categories (see Table V). The provision of child care, nursing homes and boarding schools, which may help break the female-family tie, should be looked at in promoting female mobility.

The second factor, which is not unrelated to the first, lies in the land plot assigned to each household mostly on a per capita basis, under the production responsibility system. Farmers consider land to be as important as their lives. They will not give it up even if it is more profitable to do so in the short run. Unless non-farming income is sustainable and reaches a high level which relieves the household from worrying about food shortages and price risks in bad harvest years, households prefer to be self-sufficient in their basic food supply, at least to a certain extent. Under this circumstance, customs and tradition come into effect to tie female labourers up with the plot, even if the elderly, children or housework problems are resolved. In many places, the small plot can be looked after on a part-time basis, but the labourer must stay within the township. This further explains why the intra-migrants had a higher female component. Stability or security of grain supply in the rural areas, and policies promoting cooperative farming which allow individual families to invest in land only in the co-ops, would help increase female mobility. In addition, the incomplete nature of property rights over land in rural China must be rectified as it prevents peasants from selling their plots in order to become permanent migrants.²⁸

The absence or shortage of social facilities available to migrants represents the third factor which is detrimental to family migration and thus female migration. This problem is particularly severe in the urban areas. As reported in Zheng *et al.*,²⁹ most construction workers resided in worksheds or big halls, peasant traders mostly sleep in the free market or bus/train stations. In addition, public utilities such as hospitals and schools are largely closed to migrants. This is why even some long-term migrants have to leave their families behind. The link of sex ratio to family migration can best be seen by comparisons between long-term and temporary migrants, as it is unusual for temporary migrants to take families with them. On the other hand, there is no reason, other than family migration, for long-term migration to have a larger female component than its temporary counterparts. Statistics presented in Table V confirm the conclusion here. For example, the male-female ratios were 100:88 and 100:35, respectively for long-term and temporary in-migrants. The issue of social facilities/services can also be used to explain the thin tails of age distribution of migrants, as discussed in the section on age distribution in this paper.

Finally, there may exist the sex-specific job factor. Bardhan suggests that sex-specific labour inputs are not perfectly substitutable in production.³⁰ Most emigrants engage in heavy, hard and even dangerous work and meanwhile live under appalling conditions. These are just not appropriate for women. Women are considered more suited to service industries, eg restaurants, hotels, shops. As is shown later, the absorption capacity of the service industry is rather small. The decreases in female mobility from inflow to intraflow to outflow correspond to the increases in the percentage of construction, building and transportation migrants. This may well confirm the sex-specific and non-substitutability argument put forward by Bardhan. As the service industry grows and as the urban industries other than construction and transportation open their doors to rural migrants, female mobility is expected to improve.

The above factors all contribute to the higher female-male ratio of incoming migrants as these consisted of some 10% urban residents, who are better educated. As is known, urban residents and the better educated are more liberalised with regard to customs and traditions. The urban-rural migrants are not in any way associated with land plots. Moreover, since some of the incoming migrants are sought after by the rural sector, and in fact normally have social facilities pre-arranged for them, family migration is definitely more prevalent for in-migrants. These mean a more balanced sex ratio and a more balanced age distribution. In a similar way, the intermediate sex ratio for intra-migrants can be explained.

Obviously these factors do not act independently and their relative impacts may change as the economy develops and as further reforms are introduced. Assessing the relative impacts of these factors awaits more data and further research, possibly in the form of econometric estimation of qualitative-response equations such as multivariate probit models.

Destinations/origins: a positive relationship between distance and migration

Looking at the destinations of the migrants from the surveyed villages, over 61% of them moved within their townships, 39% left the townships. Among the out-of-town migrants, 48.8% migrated to non-urban areas. The remaining 51.2% who entered urban areas were composed of 17.3% going to rural and county-level towns, 29.5% to small and medium cities, 3.8% to large cities and 0.6% to other countries. As far as origins of in-migrants are concerned, nearly 91% of them were from villages, with over 9% plus originating from urban areas, that is, towns and cities.

Human capital migration models propose that distance is a factor limiting internal migration because it is negatively related to information flow and positively related to travelling cost. Another reason might be the uncertainty and risks associated with social and cultural difference/conflicts in distant areas.³¹ Surprisingly, the Chinese data do not support this proposition. Among the 26 993 out-of-town migrants, 1418 went to other rural towns in other townships, 3255 went to county-level towns, 7941 went to small and medium cities, 1024 went to large cities and 174 went overseas. The remaining 13 181 went to villages in other townships. Ignoring the big cities and overseas for the sake of

argument, the figures trace out a positive distance-migration relationship, since distances to rural towns, county-level towns and small and medium cities can reasonably be assumed to be progressively increasing.

Readers may well question the validity of the positive distance-migration relationship revealed by comparing flows into rural towns, county-level towns and cities. And there is a good reason for them to do so, in that cities, towns and villages are heterogeneous in many aspects, among which distance is only one, and perhaps not the most significant. Of particular importance is the existence of many institutional constraints on internal migration in China; these constraints are different for migrating to villages, towns and cities. All else being equal, entering cities is most difficult and entering villages is relatively easy as far as government regulations are concerned. Therefore, the destination factor must be somehow controlled in order properly to establish the distance-migration relationship. This can be achieved if migrants to cities (or towns or villages) can be further disaggregated according to distances (for example, remote cities and nearby cities). Fortunately, the village-destined emigrants from the 222 villages can be further disaggregated into within-county and out-of-county movers. Also, the village-originated immigrants can be broken down into three groups: within-county, inter-county but within-region, and inter-region. Note that the village-originated or village-destined migrants as a whole can be viewed as being homogeneous, not only in terms of the group's origin and destination, but also in other aspects such as education, family background and so on. As a consequence, any conclusions extracted from such disaggregations are believed to be fairly convincing.

Among the 13 181 out-migrants who all emigrated from the surveyed villages and all went to villages or non-urban areas, 5606 were intra-county emigrants, while 7575 migrated outside the county boundaries. Meanwhile, among the 7060 in-migrants all of whom came from non-urban areas and immigrated to the surveyed villages, fewer than half (3169) came from within the county. Moreover, village-originated in-migrants from other regions totalled 2111, outnumbering the inter-county but within-region counterpart, which was 1780. In passing, it is noted that among the urban-rural migrants (sum of 733), over 68% came from cities (501) which are usually further away from villages than towns, and yet only 232 were from closer towns. The Chinese evidence undoubtedly shows a positive relationship between migration and distance. This relationship remained valid in 1993.³²

The finding is certainly surprising but is firmly conclusive as well. The root cause of the positive relationship identified lies in the structural unemployment problem coupled with different resource bases not only between urban and rural economies but also across geographic locations within rural areas. The different skills and qualities of labourers which were inherited or developed locally during the period of isolation and separation are often complementary. It is the author's first hand experience that Jiangsu school leavers are often trained as bricklayers, carpenters or dress-makers, while Zhejiang residents are reasonably known for their merchandising skills. The majority of hairdresser migrants are from Guangdong and the majority of urban baby sitters are from rural Anhui and Sichuan. Since there is a general unemployment problem in China, the further

away the destinations are, the better the match of skills with the relevant demand, thus the more migration. The existence of reverse selectivity bias in China is reflected here again.

It is noted that the small and medium cities played a significant role in promoting internal migration in China. They absorbed nearly one-third of out-migrants. As is known to many China observers, sociologists and economists in China have long advocated the importance of small and medium cities in absorbing surplus labour. Since 1982 China has fostered the growth of rural marketing centres and hoped that they will form small cities, providing alternative urban settings for the absorption of surplus rural population. This has been called a rural urbanisation strategy adopted by the central and local governments. The results presented above indicate a degree of success of the government strategy and should help reinforce the views of sociologists and economists, though the success is very much an unconsolidated one in the sense that most of the migrants to small and medium cities were temporary stayers (see later discussion).

As announced by the Deputy Minister for Construction in late 1994, a more extensive experiment is underway focusing on the design and implementation of rural urbanisation policies. At the national level, the central government is in the process of selecting 500 key rural centres for trial. Regional and county governments are required to select their own key centres.³³ The analysis in this paper points to the need to provide public services to migrants in a flexible way when designing such experiments.

Occupational distribution of migrants

As mentioned earlier, there is little within-agriculture migration in China. The vast majority of migrants (97%) shifted from agricultural to non-farming activities. One may ask whether labour-exchange and within-village migration across farms are common in China. The answer is no. This conclusion is reached by analysing a set of survey data on household time allocation. The survey shows that only 3.1% of total labour utilisation was used for exchange or hire.³⁴ Further, this tiny 3.1% was not used in agricultural production because its distribution over time reversely matched the agricultural cycle. In China, the busiest farming periods are the third then the second followed by the low first and then fourth quarters, but the exchange and hiring of labour mostly occurred in the fourth (1.16%) and first (0.84%) quarters. The busier second quarter received 0.75% and the smallest 0.35% went to the busiest quarter. This pattern of exchange and hire labour usage closely matches the private house-building activities in the rural areas, which is consistent with the author's first hand observation. Thus, there is indeed little, if any, agriculture-agriculture migration in China. On the contrary, cross-farm migration is quite substantial in many other developing countries.³⁵

Table VI presents the composition of migrants by occupation. At the aggregate level (see the last column of the table), the employment pattern of migrants seems broadly consistent with international evidence. That is, most migrants are involved in building and construction and industrial activities. An important

TABLE VI
Composition of migrants by economic activities, 1986

<i>Economic activities</i>	<i>Outflow</i>		<i>Intraflow</i>		<i>Inflow</i>		<i>Overall</i>	
	(persons)	(%)	(persons)	(%)	(persons)	(%)	(persons)	(%)
Agriculture	2 179	8.10	0	0.00	531	6.81	2 710	3.47
Industry	4 593	17.00	19 499	45.10	4 074	52.28	28 166	36.11
Construction	8 596	31.80	7 602	17.60	1 080	13.86	17 278	22.15
Transport	1 655	6.10	3 593	8.30	147	1.89	5 395	6.92
Service	2 249	8.40	4 583	10.60	557	7.15	7 389	9.47
Other	7 721	28.60	7 946	18.40	1 404	18.02	17 071	21.88
Total	26 993	100.00	43 223	100.00	7 793	100.00	78 009	100.00

difference, however, lies in the high percentage of intra- and in-migrants engaged in rural-based industrial activities (45.1% and 52.3%, respectively). By inference, the urban formal sector absorbed little rural surplus labour as only 17% of out-migrants participated in industrial activities and most of them were likely to be employed in rural enterprises. The role of township enterprises in absorbing surplus labour can thus never be overlooked, as strongly argued by Zhou, Dillon and Wan.¹⁶ On the other hand, the absorbing capacities of agriculture and the service sectors appear quite low by international standards.

Given the importance of rural industry in China, it is useful to scrutinise its capacity of absorbing surplus labourers. This is achieved by further breaking down the industry-employed 19 499 intra-migrants. The largest share went to village-run enterprises which absorbed 33.42% (6517 heads). Conversely, the role of township-run enterprises is diminishing since they only absorbed 13.5% (2632). The recently established and flourishing family/private and cooperative enterprises in various forms accounted for 50.97% (9940). Of particular interest is the large in-taking capacity of family/private enterprises, which absorbed 25.52% (4977) of the intra-migrants. From an overall perspective it is likely that government policies in general, and the credit or lending policy in particular, which are currently biased towards collective (township-run and village-run) enterprises, have an effect on migration and should be reviewed.

Accompanying the rapid development of rural enterprises and further division of labour in rural areas, the service industry will germinate and prosper. The fact that a moderate proportion of intra- and in-migrants were active in the service sector signals the beginning of the formation of and the potential for growth of the rural service industry. The disappointing share of the service sector in out-migration has a lot to do with the nature of the urban informal sector and government policy. The urban service sector has been regarded as the major destination for the urban unemployed. In particular, the pressure on the city administration to solve urban unemployment problems had often produced discrimination against service outlets proposed or operated by rural migrants. The general absence of social facilities for rural migrants also put them at a

TABLE VII
Percentage of long-term migrants by economic activity, 1986 (%)

<i>Economic activities</i>	<i>Outflow</i>	<i>Intraflow</i>	<i>Inflow</i>	<i>Overall</i>
Agriculture	14.73	n/a	32.58	18.23
Industry	19.49	67.39	68.46	59.73
Construction	16.54	49.41	12.30	31.53
Transport	33.05	64.85	39.46	54.40
Service	46.47	39.16	28.80	50.43
Other	17.69	33.11	46.65	27.25

n/a - not available because of the absence of the relevant data.

disadvantage as the service sector, dictated by the nature of the industry, demands long-term residence. In fact, among the occupations for emigrants, the service sector possessed the highest rate of long-term stayers (see Table VII). Unless reforms in the urban housing, education, medical service and administration are complete and successful, the percentage of rural migrants participating in urban service activities is unlikely to reach the level witnessed in other LDCs.

The patterns of internal migration, in terms of occupational distribution, were quite consistent among out- in- and intra-migrants. Leaving the 'other' activities aside, industrial and construction and building sectors ranked first and second in attracting migrants, followed by the service sector. One noticeable difference between outflow and inflow or intraflow is the proportions of migrants under the row heading 'other'. The 10 percentage point difference is partially attributable to the fact that students progressing into high schools and above fall into this category and most of these schools are located in cities or large towns. On the other hand, it is rare for students at any level to migrate into village-level (almost exclusively primary and low-quality) schools.

Two interesting observations are worth mentioning. First, rural construction activity is found to be quite substantial and absorbed some 17.6% of intra-migrants and 13.9% of in-migrants. To the extent that building and construction mirror industrialisation, rural modernisation is well and truly underway. Second, the proportion of immigrants getting into enterprises has been very high, exceeding 52%. The underlying causes are: (i) immigrants include non-rural residents, who in general would not come to the countryside unless sacrificing their urban lifestyle was compensated through monetary gains;³⁷ (ii) immigrants are better-educated than the existing rural labour force or emigrants. As long as returns to human capital are positive, which is believed to be the case in rural China, it is reasonable for them to find employment positions with better financial rewards. Needless to say, rural enterprises provide the only opportunity for job security and high income in rural areas.

Age composition of migrants: the younger the more mobile

Thanks to the absence of age composition data in terms of either population or total labour force of the surveyed villages, percentages who have migrated

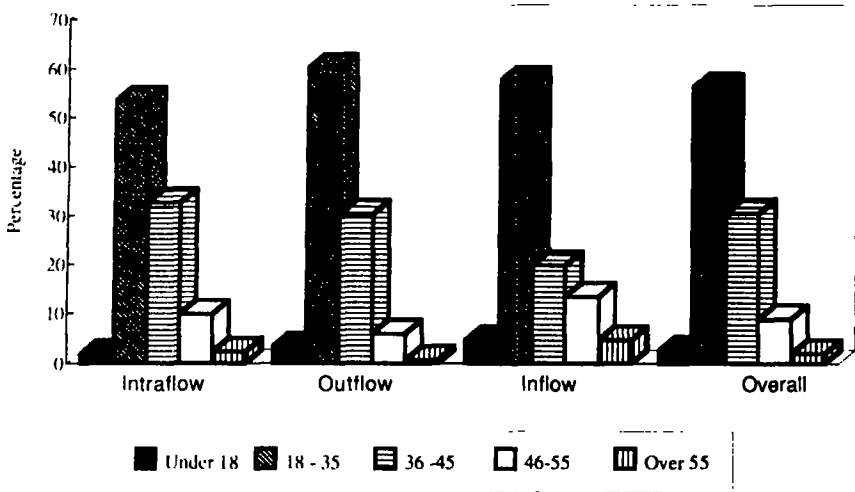


FIGURE 2 Age composition of migrants, 1986.

within each age group cannot be calculated. The age compositions of migrants are, nevertheless, shown in Figure 2. If the two tails are ignored for the moment and each panel is examined independently, then the proportion of migrants declines as age goes up for intraflow, inflow and outflow. In all cases, the age group of 18 to 35 constitutes the largest component, exceeding 53%. This of course may be related to the whole population structure.

Comparing across panels in the figure, it seems that out-migrants possessed the youngest composition while immigrants had the oldest age structure. These differences remain true even if the group 18 and under is excluded from consideration. The relatively young age structure of the out-migrants signifies that the younger members of the population are more mobile. Many researchers have drawn the same conclusion. However, previous literature often attributes this finding to one or both of the following causes: (a) young people have a higher return to migration in the long run, (b) they seek education opportunities in urban areas. These are not really applicable in China as the door of the formal urban sector is not open to rural migrants and student migrants are generally under 18 (education opportunities can only be pursued through progression in China and cannot be sought at a later date). It can even be asserted that there are no long-run prospects for rural-to-city migrants and that these migrants therefore do not include any long-run ingredients into their decision-making processes. The fact that the emigrants possessed the lowest proportion of long-term stayers for every age group, except the youngest, speaks for itself (cf. Table X). From another perspective, the majority of rural-city migrants are construction and building workers (cf. Table VI) and yet this occupation held the least proportion of long-term migrants, second only to the typically seasonal agriculture (see Table

VII). Consequently, the evidence from China points to the rejection of the earlier attribution regarding internal migration and age.

In the author's view, the young age structure of emigrants stems from both the supply and demand sides. On the supply side, young people are more active, more ambitious and more adventurous. They thus possess a higher propensity to move. On the demand side, relatively more of the emigrants are engaged in construction and transportation activities, which require strong and young labourers. Also, young people can easily fit into different and rather harsh sociocultural environments. The older age structure of in-migrants can be attributed to the fact that rural enterprises demand experienced and sometimes retired workers from the urban areas. These technical staff often bring with them product orders and new contracts. In fact, some retirees do go to country areas to start up enterprises of various forms. This explains why the in-migrants had the largest percentage of people over 55.

As discussed earlier, institutional arrangements and availability of social facilities for migrants, apart from job security which is a relevant factor in any case and in any country, determine the extent of family migration in China. This is why family migration is most extensive in the case of in-migration, and why out-of-town family migration is small. To a certain extent, these can be used to explain the relatively fat tails of the age distribution of in-migrants and the in-between age structure of the intra-migrants. One observation does need special attention—the age group 18 or under was smaller for intraflow than that for inflow. This is because family members who were dependants of the intra-migrants were not counted as migrants.

To reinforce the conclusion that young people are more mobile, the ratios between the intra- and out-migrants for all age groups are computed. The calculation shows that for the youngest age group (17 years or under), if 100 persons migrated within the township, more than 113 would migrate out of town. For the groups 18–35, 36–45 and 46–55, each 100 within-town migrants was accompanied by 70, 58 and 38 out-of-town migrants, respectively. In the eldest group, for every 100 in-town migrants, fewer than 17 left the town. Clearly, the younger the migrants, the more of them tended to move away from home. It is fairly reasonable to expect that younger people are more likely to be pulled by the urban environment, where a sense of adventure and the attraction of entertainment (not necessarily economic gains) play a role.

Temporary vs long-term migration

Given the huge surplus of rural population and the government intention to promote rural urbanisation through the development of towns and cities up to the medium size, one would logically expect the urban territories to accommodate a substantial proportion of long-term migrants with the exception of the large cities. Apart from the fact that migrant flows into large cities were indeed small, the survey data do not match government intentions or normal expectations. According to the survey data, nearly 80% of out-migrants were seasonal migrants. Conversely, over 50% of in-migrants and intra-migrants were long-term stayers. Worse still, Table VIII reveals that 65.72% of migrants into big

TABLE VIII
**Percentage of long-term migrants by
 origin/destination, 1986 (%)**

<i>Destination or origin</i>	<i>Outflow</i>	<i>Inflow</i>	<i>Overall</i>
Villages	14.92	48.73	26.71
Rural towns	23.06	n/a	23.06
County towns	26.24	89.22	30.43
Medium and small cities	20.24	87.83	23.62
Big cities	65.72	87.80	67.36
Over seas	97.13	0.00	97.13

n/a not available because of the absence of relevant data.

cities were long-term migrants. In sharp contrast, long-term migrants into small and medium cities only accounted for 20.24%. It is also worth pointing out that urban-rural migrants tended to stay permanently (over 87%), while only 48.73% of rural in-migrants stayed permanently.

The across-the-board high long-term rates for in-migrants reflects easier access to accommodation, schooling and medical care, and the initiatives of authorities to assist migrants in rural areas. Provision of social facilities and reform of the welfare systems in towns, small and medium cities are definitely needed to facilitate rural urbanisation. It should also be mentioned that social and economic problems arising from internal migration, as reported in the media, are largely related to temporary migrants. Sensible solutions to these problems are difficult to find or implement, given the nature of the blindness and temporary nature of the flow (temporary migration is often referred to as blind flood or *mangliu* in Chinese). It is thus suggested that government policy should aim at increasing long-term migration rather than trying to manage the unmanageable, particularly in the medium and small cities.

Turning to distance and duration of stay, it is natural to propose a positive relationship between these factors for two reasons. First, seasonality of cropping dictates that those who are attached to farms must be temporary migrants; they would normally not migrate out of their counties of residence. Second, it is only economical to travel out of a region if a relatively long-term job is in sight. Once an individual or family has migrated to distant areas, job-seeking is the norm and can last for quite a while. There is, perhaps, a psychological factor here as well. Long-distance migrants, like gamblers, bet too much mentally and economically, thus they tend to insist on searching for opportunities of 'winning'. But not-so-distant migrants tend to return home quickly to await for future opportunities when a job is completed or a position is not clearly in sight. The Chinese data, however, do not provide a clear answer to our reasoning. When out- and in-migrants are added together, long-term migration rates are higher for intra-county (24.25%) than inter-county movers (22.39%), although inter-regional migrants did seem to possess a higher long-term rate (44.78%).

Table IX displays percentages of long-term migrants for each education level. It seems that terms of contract were positively related to education. This is definitely true for out-migrants. Also true is the fact that the best (worst)

TABLE IX
Percentage of long-term migrants by education levels,
1986 (%)

<i>Education levels</i>	<i>Outflow</i>	<i>Inflow</i>	<i>Intraflow</i>	<i>Overall</i>
Tertiary and above	100.00	93.02	87.77	92.42
High school	49.74	51.39	59.94	56.14
Middle school	33.86	53.33	53.19	47.92
Primary school	18.43	59.85	60.88	46.56
Semi-illiterate and illiterate	8.95	43.29	51.73	30.83

educated always had the highest (lowest) long-term rates across all three categories. Moreover, the data show relatively minor differences between high school and middle school leavers. This is understandable as they only differ by two years of schooling and current demand may fail to distinguish these two qualifications. Ignoring the two end-groups in Table IX, there seemingly exists a negative relationship between duration of stay and education for the inflows, for which we cannot offer a compelling explanation.

Long-term migrants as a proportion of total migrants in different age groups are presented in Table X. Except for intraflow, the two end-groups had the highest long-term rates. This is consistent with the earlier observation that family migration usually does not occur unless the migrants are long-term stayers. Naturally the children and elderly are most likely to be family migrants and thus are most likely to be long-term movers. Since intraflow does not involve relocation or family migration, the tails of the intraflow age distribution were understandably thin. In fact, the end-groups for intraflow had the lowest long-term rates. Leaving the eldest group aside, a positive relationship between age and period of stay does emerge, again with intra-migration as an exception. Clearly, the group aged 18-35 not only represented the largest group in all forms of migration, it also had higher long-term rates in the cases of out- and in-migration. In all cases, there is little difference between the age groups of 36-45 and 46-55.

By occupations, the underlying determinants of tenure of contracts for migrants must be the nature of the sectors. For example, manufacturing activities

TABLE X
Percentage of long-term migrants by age group,
1986 (%)

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Outflow</i>	<i>Inflow</i>	<i>Intraflow</i>	<i>Overall</i>
Under 18	41.14	87.33	40.58	49.10
18-35	20.81	52.35	53.80	41.44
36-45	18.30	43.41	60.72	45.09
46-55	18.20	43.21	64.02	50.26
Over 55	45.30	82.66	50.77	58.09

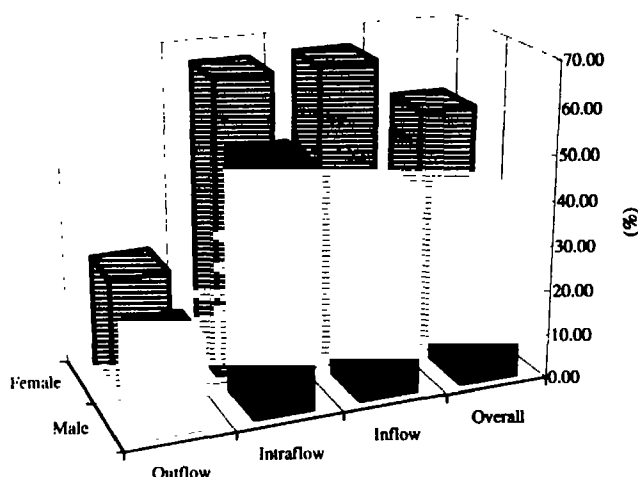


FIGURE 3 Percentage of long-term migrants by sex, 1986.

are usually continuous, with little seasonality; so are small shops and restaurants. Thus, migrants in the service and industrial sectors tend to be long-term stayers. Transport is in short supply in China, thus any seasonality may not affect the employment pattern in this sector. These arguments are all confirmed by the figures presented in Table VII. Construction and building workers possessed the smallest proportion of long-term stayers, whether or not they were involved in out- intra- or in-migration. This reflects the fact that few construction projects are large enough to last more than a year and sub-contracting is a common practice in China for achieving an earlier completion date, as required by the property developers.

Finally, female migrants are more likely to be long-term stayers. The proportion of long-term stayers among female migrants exceeds its male equivalent in all cases (see Figure 3). This exactly matches women's relative immobility and is a direct result of customs and culture. In addition, it is found that in-migrants not only had a higher rate of female participation in migration, they also had a more balanced gender ratio for long-term stayers. In fact, long-term gender ratios were always more balanced than their short-term counterparts. This is again attributable to females being more likely to be part of family migration.

Concluding remarks and policy implications

In this paper, many aspects of internal migration in China have been analysed. This is attributable partly to the richness of information in the survey data and partly to the research objective, which was to provide an overall picture. The

latter objective was set because of the general lack of such materials in the Western literature. As a consequence, the approach adopted had to be largely descriptive. Despite the absence of a vigorous quantitative model, the findings are interesting and the conclusions in many cases seem irrefutable.

It is undoubtedly true that many characteristics of migration in China are consistent with international experience. These include: (i) young people are more mobile than older people; (ii) females are less mobile than males; and (iii) a dominant proportion of migrants participates in non-farming activities, mainly industrial and construction work. But these consistencies may be superficial. For example, females are not so less mobile in the case of long-term migration. Also, their mobility increases in the case of rural-inward moves. As another example, although almost all migrants left agriculture, the majority remain in rural areas. In particular, family and cooperative enterprises in the countryside attract a substantial amount of migrants. On the other hand, rural-to-large-city migration was negligible in 1986. As for age structure, the in-migrants are much older than the out-migrants.

Surprising as it may seem, some of the important consensuses reached in the literature will have to be questioned in view of the findings in this paper. First, education does not promote migration, at least not significantly so. On the contrary, education acted as a deterrent to emigration and as stimulus to in-migration. Second, distance of travel displays a positive association with volume of migration in general. Everything else being equal, rural-rural migration increases as the origin and destination are further apart. Third, the informal sector absorbs only a small percentage of rural emigrants. Finally, rural-destined migrants are more likely to stay permanently and the opposite occurs for urban-destined migrants (except to large cities).

The above findings contradict what various migration models would predict. This implies that the human capital migration model and others must be modified substantially before they can be applied to China. Inappropriate application of Western frameworks to Chinese data are many, and misleading conclusions (some quite ridiculous) constantly appear in the literature. Policy recommendations drawn from such models and/or empirical applications will certainly be distorted. If implemented, the consequences could be disastrous.

To explain the seemingly counter-intuitive findings, the following hypotheses are advanced in this paper, which may be tested in future studies. First, urban reform lagged behind rural reform, which impedes the development of urban labour markets. This is the prime cause of negligible rural-city migration. It may also contribute to the negative education-migration relationship. Second, there is a significant structural unemployment problem in China, with the less educated being in huge surplus and the highly educated being in demand. This is the major factor determining the negative migration-education finding. When coupled with different resource bases (including human resources developed locally) across the vast geographic areas, this factor also helps explain the positive distance-migration relationship. Finally, there is a general shortage or absence of social services for migrants, especially in the non-rural areas. This is not only detrimental to migration in general, but more importantly adversely affects female and family migration, thus permanent moves.

Given that the Chinese government wishes to adopt a rural urban strategy to solve the labour surplus problem through the development enterprises and small and medium cities, the following policy implication this study can be derived. First, in the design of and assistance to development, social facility provision must occupy some priority, necessary in order to sustain the rural-city (small and medium-sized) migration. At present, social facilities (nursing homes, boarding schools, etc) are absent in the countryside and unavailable to migrants in non-rural areas, which simply prevents family migration. Unless families (the elderly and the children) can be settled properly at their destinations, the majority of migrants will be temporary residents. International as well as Chinese experience indicate that it is the short-term migrants who cause infrastructure, moral and other problems. Furthermore, unless a large percentage of the migrants reside in non-urban areas on a permanent basis, the small and medium cities will not prosper. In other words, the government strategy of rural urbanisation cannot be realised. Second, in the design of urban reform, some mechanism should be introduced to facilitate two-way (urban-rural and rural-urban) flows. Apart from the city lifestyle, which cannot be changed, privileges attached to urban residence such as housing, social security payments, subsidised public transport, education and medical services must be removed. Migrants must be allowed to share and compete for any government-provided services or facilities. Meanwhile, social facilities or services must be gradually established in places other than big cities. This will help promote urban-rural migration and improve resource allocation (particularly human resource) between rural and urban sectors, and thus close the urban-rural income gap. Third, property rights over land in rural areas must be clearly defined and implemented. To do so will increase female mobility and reduce the volume of labour leaving farming. Also, it will lead to increased agricultural productivity and farming scales. These will enable those remaining in the rural areas to exploit scale economies and raise their income levels. Fourth, since land fragmentation has been a serious obstacle to the growth of the foodgrain sector, which relates to the food security problem in China, a substantial amount of the rural population emigrates from agriculture, the land fragmentation problem is expected to be difficult to resolve. Fourth, in order to promote rural urbanisation, locations of rural enterprises should be carefully selected and planned in conjunction with the development of small and medium cities. This may take the form of providing rent assistance and publicly owned infrastructure to those enterprises which relocate to these cities. In view of the rapid expansion of private/family (often small-scale) enterprises scattered all over the country, incentives must be initiated by the government to attract enterprises to the small and medium cities. A clear consequence is the promotion of rural urbanisation and family or permanent migration. What is more important is the reduction in costs of road construction, transportation and pollution control in the long run. Finally, a nationwide network must be established by the government to provide information for migrants regarding their rights and obligations, job prospects and cultural differences in distant areas. The need for such a network is obvious given the number of migrants and their low educational status.

Notes

During the revision of the paper, useful comments were received from the Editor of the journal, Professor Gordon MacAulay (University of Sydney) and Hong Li (Zhejiang Academy of Social Sciences), and Dr Zhangyue Zhou (University of Sydney) and Enjiang Cheng (University of Adelaide), for which I am very grateful.

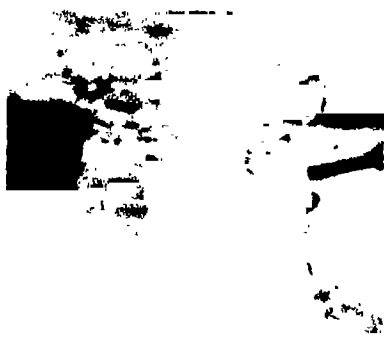
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Algeria's democratisation process: a frustrated hope

MOHAND SALAH TAHI

Introduction

The main obstacle to democratisation in Algeria is not so much the Islamists as the persistence of old ways of thinking.¹ Islamism and *intégrisme* (or religious fundamentalism) are the logical outcome of a regime which, having failed to respond to people's material expectations, sought to base its legitimacy both on Islam and the buried bones of the martyrs of the Algerian war of independence.

Over two years after the *coup d'état* interrupted the electoral process in January 1992, and following the state of emergency, nothing serious has been done to bring the country out of chaos and confusion. Three presidents and three prime ministers have succeeded each other without any sign of progress, and without introducing any important concrete reforms. The ruling authority seems unable to present a political solution or propose a clear economic programme that will dispel the turbulence in the country. The *Front Islamique du Salut*—The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), in spite of being outlawed in March 1992, is still able to muster support within society, which is at the edge of an explosion because of mass unemployment and the hardships of everyday life. Because of falling world prices, oil revenues, which represent 98% of Algeria's exports, are insufficient to keep the economy working and to service its \$27 billion external debt. As a consequence, the country has no other choice but to swallow its pride and submit to IMF conditions by restructuring its economy and rescheduling its debt, despite the consequences for the already unfavourable social conditions. After 30 years of euphoria, during which the revolution and independence provided the ideological bases and oil the economic resources, the realisation is dawning that little has been achieved in Algeria.

Today, three politico-ideological currents dominate the Algerian landscape. They are the Islamists, the Baathists and the Berberists. For the first, the present drama is the result of a lack of rigour in the observation of the religious principles of Islam; for the second, it emanates from a failure to recognise the purely Arab character of the Algerian people and its culture; and lastly for the Berberists, any solution must be preceded by the recognition of the Berber language as a national and official language.²

The increasing wave of daily violence and terrorism demonstrates the depth of the multi-dimensional crisis and political deadlock. Two totalitarianisms are contesting for the monopolisation of power. One arbitrarily and illegitimately uses public power, the other 'authorises' itself to commit all kinds of violence in the name of divine power.

A deficit of legitimacy

Resorting to symbols is an old method of seeking legitimisation of every kind. Since Algeria's independence in 1962, the ruling elites have sought to keep their grip on power by relying on their legitimacy in the War of Liberation, with the first of November 1954 (the date of the outbreak of war) serving as a point of reference and a source of validation. The rulers have often identified this value as their own and that of the people, since, for them, the power is that of the people. Status obtained in the army and in the shadow of the single party have for long been of more value than the highest academic qualifications. The 'revolutionary' generation has, therefore, been transferred into a caste in power in a country where over two thirds of the population today were born after the revolution. Not until the 1980s did knowledge start to claim its share of power at the expense of the historic and revolutionary legitimacy.³

Of course, the 'November generation' had the qualities to make war. Yet it was wrong to think it possessed the qualities to create peace and ensure development. When social contradictions started to grow during the 1980s, the populist discourse of the November generation began to lose its effect. Between the egalitarian discourse and a social reality which contradicts it, there resides an unbridgeable gap, which led to a reduction in the credit of the *Mujahid* (freedom fighter), particularly among the young. The regime reacted with an arrogant paternalism which permitted the injection of some new blood into the hierarchy. The new generation accepted this paternalism with difficulty, because it considered it simply an attempt by the elders to remain in power.

In reality, it is reasonable to say that the old generation has not yet understood the profound change that has taken place in Algerian society; hence it can no longer lead the country. Indeed, the present situation is a consequence of its stubbornness and mismanagement. Attempts at rewriting history so as to underpin the legitimacy of the single party's work of restructuring the state—supposed to have been dismantled in 1830 by the French—have only served to inflame anti-French sentiment. Haranguing was the favourite occupation of Ben Bella (Algeria's first president from 1962 to 1965) who organised numerous meetings and symbolic ceremonies. During the Boumedienne era (1965–1978) the regime, whose main obsession was the legitimisation of its assumption of power, endeavoured neither to inject a democratic culture nor to promote an ethos of hard work among the people, especially as the oil boom of the 1970s served to make development an easy task.

A turning point came in October 1988, when there was a popular revolt against a system legitimised by the ideals of November '54. The single party was denounced as being a system contrary to the principles of November '54. The 1988 'storm', however, did not bring about the collapse of the system. Instead, in order to extend its life the FLN party-army alliance helped to create a new kind of totalitarian party in Algeria. Against this background, the first ever free general elections in the history of independent Algeria, held in December 1991, were annulled, and the 'most popular' party (the FIS) was banned. Now the institutions of the constitutional state have been dissolved. In response to the protests that followed these decisions, 'security camps' have been opened and thousands of Islamists have been 'deported' to the Sahara.

At the same time a new breed of 'democrats' has appeared: the Republicans. They too claim to serve the ideals of November '54, but they have also demanded that the state eradicate the seeds of Islamist extremism in the country. They have advocated a 'new war of liberation against integristism and obscurantism'. As a result, the country is now experiencing an unprecedented wave of violence. Bomb attacks, assassinations, abductions...a river of blood has submerged the country, yet the system has still not collapsed.

The coup d'état

In December 1991, 49 out of the 64 legalised political parties participated in the general election. The popular verdict revealed that a great majority of them had no weight or grassroots support. Only three political formations came out with seats. These were the FIS, the Socialist Forces Front (FFS) and the National Liberation Front (FLN). Those on the 'democratic' front who failed to get elected were among the first to call for military intervention and to speak against any negotiated solution. These came later to be known as the '*Eradicateurs*' (Eradicators), 'Modernists', and 'Republicans'. They mainly include the Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie—Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD); the former Algerian Communist Party—Parti de l'Avant Garde Socialiste (PAGS) which changed its name in 1993 to Ettahaddi (the challenge); and finally the leadership of the Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens—Algerian Workers Union (UGTA).

The January 1992 *coup d'état* was not a response to the FIS's election victory, simply because this party and a number of other Islamist parties had been legalised by the regime and were doubly legitimised by it and the other opposition political parties which took part in the election. In reality the coup was incited by a fear of the emergence of a genuine democratic force. The FFS march of 2 January 1992, which gathered the biggest street crowd in the history of Algeria (between 800 000 and one million), aimed at mobilising the silent majority, particularly the 42% of the population who abstained, to vote in the second round. The marchers brandished slogans against both the existing 'police state' and a 'probable *integrist* republic'. This was a major cause of the coup. After all, the FIS is the product of a regime with which it could have cohabited. All the institutions drafted since Algeria's independence have devoted their first articles to the glorification of Islam and its consideration as the state religion. Moreover, the comparatively small turnout of voters appeared to magnify the importance of the FIS.

A genuine democratic force from outside the existing system and opposed to it would certainly threaten the interests and privileges of those who, for three decades, had been drawing huge profits from their positions. Contrary to the Western democracies, where the bourgeoisie has the right of ownership and for this reason governs, in Algeria the *nomenklatura* governs and for this reason has rights of ownership. The army did not intervene to break a drift orchestrated by the FIS, but to break the 'democratic' constitution. The generals who had kept the country under their sway for 30 years understood that a consensus was being established in order to bypass them, and that power in Algeria was in the process

of being taken away from them. They probably sensed that the FIS was not going to make mistakes that would call the army to resume power. In such circumstances the *coup d'état* was in no way anti-Islamist. It was a *coup d'état* against the emancipation of Algeria.

A few months after the 11 January *coup*, and the terrible repression that followed, the Islamists, holders of the national legitimacy, went into armed resistance. The thesis which now prevails in the West, and particularly in France, is that the Islamists are murdering the intelligentsia. This, however, needs substantiation. First, the assassination of intellectuals has never been entirely proven to be the work of the Islamists, especially those who claim allegiance to the FIS; Second, and more importantly, a number of the assassinated 'intellectuals' not only supported the military junta but also served as members of the Conseil Consultatif National (CCN)—a group of 60 people co-opted by the regime to play the role of a puppet parliament at a time when the elected 'deputies' were in the Sahara camps. These appointed members of parliament are fiercely anti-democratic, for otherwise they would not be there. A democrat who stands before army tanks in Tiananmen Square is a thousand times more democratic than a 'democrat' who calls for the intervention of army tanks in the streets of Algiers.

Constitutional confusion

When President Chadli's 'official resignation' became public on 11 January 1992, rumours were circulating that the army would take over to prevent an eventual establishment of a theocratic republic. In view of the conditions of Chadli's 'resignation', Algeria found itself in a constitutional deadlock as the National Assembly had already been secretly 'dissolved' by the resigning president.

According to the constitution, the President of the Assembly (Parliament) would take charge of the state for 45 days pending the election of a new president. But the Constitution did not anticipate the double vacancy of the National Assembly and the Presidency. In this situation the army's intervention was apparently 'requested' by the Prime Minister, Sid Ahmed Ghazali, to 'ensure' the country's security.

To this, the FLN reacted by declaring that 'nobody was entitled to stop the electoral process'. The Islamists were outraged by the plot, which they saw as aimed at 'confiscating the people's struggle and its project for an Islamic State'. The FIS saw in Chadli's 'resignation' a *coup d'état* which opens the path for illegal and arbitrary solutions.¹

The HCE: two years of instability

Three days later (14 January) the Haut Conseil de Sécurité (HCS), the only body of power which remained constitutional, announced the installation of a collective leadership called the Haut Comité d'Etat (HCE) composed of five members. Immediately this collective leadership was denounced by the FIS, the FLN and the

FIS. The five members of the HCE were: Mohamed Kheiredine Boudiaf, who was recalled from his exile in Morocco, as president; Major General Khaled Nezzar, the patron of the army; Colonel Ali Kafi, the General Secretary of the ex-Servicemen's organisation—Organisation Nationale des Moudjahidine (ONM); Tidjani Haddam, Rector of the Paris Mosque; and Ali Haroun, Minister of Human Rights.

In place of the defunct Assemblée Populaire Nationale (APN), the HCE set up a new judicial instrument, the Conseil Consultatif National (CCN), presided over by Redha Malek, which would legitimise the decisions of the authorities. Among the immediate decisions of the HCE were a proclamation of a State of Emergency, on February 9, 1992, for the duration of one year over the entire national territory; and the dissolution of the FIS by a decision of the Administrative Chamber of the Tribunal of Algiers on 4 March. Following the assassination of the HCE President, Mohamed Boudiaf, on 29 June 1992, Colonel Ali Kafi became president; the Foreign Minister, Redha Malek, became the fifth member of the HCE.

Mohamed Boudiaf: a man of contradictions

Following the results of the first round of the legislative elections in December 1991, Boudiaf, still in Morocco at that time, warned against the intervention of the army which he said had no programme. He also delivered harsh criticisms against the then Prime Minister, Sid Ahmed Ghazali, whom he described as the rotten *magma* of the FLN. He defended the people's verdict and the FIS's right to rule the country according to the people's wish.

However, as soon as he was installed at the head of the HCE, he embarked on practices that were in sharp contrast to his words. The electoral process was brought to a halt. The elected Islamists were thrown into concentration camps. He declared a state of siege and became a pawn in the game of those whom he had earlier criticised. His behaviour becomes more explicable if we review his past.

When, in 1981, Boudiaf dissolved his left-wing Trotskyite party, the Parti de la Révolution Socialiste (PRS), which he had founded in 1962 to oppose Ben Bella's regime, he declared that he had been mistaken to think that the majority of Algerians, 'with whom he shared profound aspirations', would espouse his ideas. Now his argument was that there was no need for an opposition party because the Algerian people 'like' dictatorship! This judgement came after having seen masses of people attending Boumedienne's funeral in December 1978.

Later the erstwhile Trotskyite was reported to have been an extremely pious Muslim who, on several occasions, interrupted work or an important audience to accomplish the duty of a good Muslim (ie to pray) on his over-used personal carpet brought from Morocco. He also went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, acquiring therefore the religious title of *Haj*. In fact, speaking of Islam, he once declared: 'Islam in this country is the religion of everyone and all the revolutions that succeeded on this land throughout history were proud of it. They glorified, protected and defended it'.⁵ This kind of speech can in no way be described as that of a democrat, nor of someone who knows the history of his own country

well. In Algeria there exist atheists and non-Muslims. To say that all the revolutions that occurred in Algeria were in the name of Islam is to detach the country from its origins and to overlook a large part of its history. Takfarinas, Jugurtha, the Donatist religious schism...had all led revolutions well before the arrival of Islam in North Africa. Both the Berber Queen, Kahina, a Jewish convert, and the Christian Berber leader, Kocella, led revolutions against invading Muslim armies in the 7th century.

Paradoxically, Boudiaf, the HCE and his Rassemblement Patriotique National (RPN) drew their staunchest support from those who claimed to have as their first priority the resuscitation of Algeria's pre-Islamic history and culture; namely the RCD.

The road to the national conference

If Boudiaf had turned his back on the opposition political parties and engaged in a populist euphoria communicating 'directly' with the people—especially through the RPN, constituted in May 1992—the Ali Kafi version of the HCE devoted its second year to appearing to 'seek' a compromise with political parties and 'to find a better formula' for the resolution of the crisis. Thus it was on 14 January 1993, the first anniversary of the HCE, that its president proposed an extension to the transitional period during which the management of state affairs was to be ensured by political parties and associated movements. The HCE called for the opening of dialogue with political parties and social and professional organisations. The first step on this path had already taken place on 21 September 1992, when the HCE received the FLN, HAMAS, NAHDA, RCD and the FIS, with the objective of reaching 'national reconciliation' to solve the crisis following the interruption of the electoral process.

On the political front, the HCE put forward two objectives: the eradication of terrorism and the 'constitution' of a political system ensuring the principle of rotation of power. However, the idea of a referendum on the transition and on amendment to the Constitution was to be quickly abandoned because of the security situation.

The HCE started direct dialogue with political parties and associations on the basis of preparing a draft on the transition. On 13 October 1993, however, three months before the end of its mandate, the HCE entrusted the dialogue to a commission of five civilians and three military officers—the Commission de Dialogue National (CDN)—with the objective of preparing the ground for a national conference. The constitution of the CDN was in fact an indication of the failure of earlier negotiations led by the HCE.

On 23 November 1993, following a meeting with the eight members of the CDN, the HCE decided to take measures to defuse the situation, such as a relaxation of the curfew, as a first step towards a return to civilian peace. It then hinted at the possibility of integrating the actors which, until then, had not participated in the dialogue. These procedures were part of the list of demands of the most representative political parties, who form part of what is known as the 'Conciliateurs' (Reconcilers).

In fact, in December the CDN proposed that the FIS become associated in the

dialogue and the national conference, provided that the party change its name! This leads us to believe that the CDN viewed the FIS as a mere collection of letters forming an acronym, rather than a politico-religious party and holder of a new goal for society. This further suggests that the decision makers were still not interested in the real issues and the right solutions.

Within three months the CDN met 47 political formations and some 40 organisations and associations representing civilian society, but always without the participation of the FIS, which was a heavyweight democratic formation. The goal of its leader, Hocine Ait Ahmed, was a sovereign national conference independent of the authorities, whose decisions should be respected. Thus, as early as 6 December 1992, the FIS announced that it would boycott all meetings with the HCE, and it refused to play the regime's game 'which seeks the cover of the opposition in order to legitimise its initiative'.⁶

Because of the desire to rehabilitate the FIS, the RCD and the PAGES (Ettahaddi), which came to be known as the 'Eradicateurs', demanded the departure of the HCE, while in the Islamist camp, HAMAS and NAHDA expressed their consent for the HCE to remain in power after January 1994. To this end the FLN proposed a meeting between the HCE and the major political parties (the FIS, FLN, HAMAS, NAHDA and RCD) in December 1993, in order to prepare for the national conference and give it sovereign authority over the decisions taken.

The dialogue, however, was far from successful. Political parties that had received over 100 000 votes in the annulled legislative elections declined to follow the HCE in its approach. The FIS, despite its dissolution, was able to wield considerable influence. In spite of the different steps taken by the dialogue, the positions of the HCE and those of influential political parties were incompatible. In reply to the demand of the major parties for a return to the electoral process, the HCE maintained its objective of another period of transition first. And in the face of this apparent deadlock, the army threatened, through its Minister of Defence, Liamine Zeroual, that it would not remain passive in case of disagreement.

After the 10 January decision by the FIS not to participate in the national conference of 25–26 January 1994, the FLN made a similar decision on 22 January, followed by the RCD a day later. The issue became one of the legitimacy and credibility of such a conference if the only political parties who commanded popular support declined to participate.

According to the FIS leader, Hocine Ait Ahmed, the conference 'has the prime objective of seeking to gain time, to concoct small equilibria among the apparatuses, clans and regions. And when the game had been played the opposition was called to participate in a big show called 'national conference' in order to endorse the enthronement at the head of the State of a candidate issued from the seraglio to the amazing contempt of the population and political parties. The army, meaning to avoid the perils of direct management, would improvise a show of 'national consensus' in order to back the results of an umpteenth family secret meeting.'⁷

In addition to its demand for the liberation of political detainees and the participation of the ex-FIS in the national conference, the FLN argued against the substitution of the HCE by another provisional presidential institution. Accordingly it recommended the extension of the HCE mandate until the date of the

organisation of presidential elections. Ali Kafi, the HCE president, a *cacique* of the FLN and the General Secretary of the ex-servicemen's organisation—ONM, even allowed himself a lapse of memory at the Extraordinary Session of the ONM in late January 1994, when he declared: 'We say to all parties, stop your manoeuvres, participate in the conference and work for its success by giving new hope to the people who are suffering and watching us. Permit hope so that trust will return between the citizen and 'his party' and between the citizen and his State.'⁸ Of what party did the President of the HCE speak? Evidently the FLN.

Finally, the National Conference for Consensus took place in the absence of the major political parties. The dialogue sponsored by the authorities failed as it was so obviously the concern of a regime reluctant to leave power. The attempt by the authorities to create a base of support by encouraging the development of non-political associations could not threaten or weaken the political parties most representative within society.

Secretly the HCE contacted Abdelaziz Bouteflika, a *baron* of the FLN and one of the pillars of Boumedienne's regime, who had been at the head of Algeria's diplomatic service from 1963 to 1979. Bouteflika initially accepted his candidacy for the post of president, but he put forward some conditions, including suppression of the post of one or two vice presidents, for he demanded control of national defence. This was obviously a throwback to the Boumedienne era. Unable to obtain control of national defence and the power to proceed on nominations within the military hierarchy, Bouteflika then declined the offer of the presidency proposed to him by the regime.

In fact the army would not have accepted a president who yearned to control it anyway. Besides, Bouteflika's origins in western Algeria would have weighed against him, as regionalism plays an important role in Algeria's political life. As it happens, most of the top leaders today are—and always have been—from eastern Algeria. The famous acronym BTS (Batna, Tebessa, Souk Ahras) has for long designated the geographical triangle which produces the governing elite.

Finally, the Minister of Defence, Liamine Zeroual, was designated president by the HCS for a transitional period of three years, in conformity with Article 6 of the 'Platform on National Consensus'. He is the Supreme Chief of all the armed forces as well as responsible for national defence. He therefore retains the defence portfolio, which he has held since July 1993, in succession to Major General Khaled Nezzar. He decides on and leads the country's foreign policy, and can call on people for a referendum on all questions of national interest. While Commander of the Land Forces and assistant to the Head of the General Staff, Liamine Zeroual was, in late 1989, in conflict with President Chadli on the question of the reorganisation of the land forces. After resigning from the army, he was nominated Algeria's Ambassador to Romania. However, he left that post in less than a year to retire to his native town, Batna (where he was born in 1941).

In his first speech to the nation on 7 February Zeroual drew attention to the need for a dialogue between all Algerians, beyond their ideological, political, cultural and economic differences. His declared priority was a return to peace through dialogue, which was to be accompanied by a just and global solution to the political, economic, social and cultural problems. Rejecting confrontation he declared: 'We are convinced that the political crisis can only be solved through

dialogue and the participation of all political forces without any exclusion'.⁹ This meant the inclusion of the moderate elements of the ex-FIS. It was also seen as a positive gesture towards the major political parties, particularly the FFS and the FLN. The latter have constantly called for reconciliation and the resumption of the electoral process. Such discourse, however, was far from pleasing to the 'hawks' in both the army and civil society; those who came to be known in the new political jargon as the '*Eradicateurs*'.

The *Eradicateurs* and the *Conciliateurs*

The situation in Algeria in 1994 resembles that of the FIS's landslide election victory in December 1991. The most widely used word, 'dialogue', is a parody. It is important to give a new sense to a number of words which have made their way into the vocabulary of Algerian politics, such as '*Conciliateurs*', '*Eradicateurs*' and '*Dialoguistes*'.

Some political parties, rejected at the ballot box in December 1991 and allied to the leadership of the UGTA, the trade unions organisation, have done everything they could to encourage the army to interrupt the electoral process. They came to be labelled the '*Eradicateurs*', in opposition to the '*Conciliateurs*', who are favourable to the reintegration of the FIS and a quick return to popular legitimacy. Backed up by the mass media and relying on fear, the '*Eradicateurs*' moved on to the offensive and advocated a new *coup de force*. The army for them was the ultimate resort against the Islamists. Yet, by calling for military intervention, they have failed to realise that a more dangerous situation could arise within the army, which is inevitably riven by the same ideological currents that divide the opposition parties and civilian society. As for the '*Conciliateurs*', the reactivation of political life means putting different factions of the Islamic movement before their responsibilities so that the factions themselves can decide on participating in the dialogue. Such measures would produce a fissure between the extremists and those who are ready to accept playing a legal game.

Today, an unequal struggle rages between the '*Eradicateurs*' on the one side, led by the RCD, Ettahaddi and the leadership of the UGTA, who refuse to risk a referendum and demand the banning of the FIS; and on the other side the '*Conciliateurs*', who include the FFS (a party ideologically in opposition to the rest of the camp), the FLN, MDA, HAMAS and NAHDA, and who demand a gesture of receptivity from the authorities and the inclusion of the ex-FIS in the dialogue. The '*Eradicateurs*', whose electoral weight is derisory, have the power of the media. Since March 1994, they have been openly calling for the creation of civilian self-defence groups, and demanding that the state distribute arms 'against the *integrisme* threat'. The appeal to a 'permanent popular movement supervised by the state, in the words of the UGTA Secretary General, Abdelhak Benhamouda,¹⁰ is the ultimate development of the internal and external offensive launched by the '*Eradicateurs*' against the new Head of State, General Liamine Zeroual, after his official announcement of the resumption of dialogue. Benhamouda's appeal was echoed by the RCD leader, Said Sadi, in late March 1994.¹¹

In fact from 1989 up until the aborted legislative elections of December 1991,

the regime did everything it could to polarise political society between the FLN and the Islamists of the FIS (a choice between the devil and the deep blue sea, or, as many Algerians term it, between plague and cholera). After the 1991 elections the FLN moved gradually into opposition. Thus the equation of polarisation has been transferred into an 'apparent' ideological confrontation between the Islamists and the '*Eradicateurs*', who call themselves the '*Republicains*'. This is in addition to the polarisation of violence between the Islamists and the military regime. This strategy of polarised confrontation has as its objective the weakening and isolation of the more genuine democratic forces.

The Eradicateurs

The Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD). This political formation, though anti-constitutional,¹² was the first political 'party' to be created on 10 February 1989, well before the Constitution of 23 February and the Law of July 1989 which allowed the creation of 'Associations of a Political Character'. It was included within the strategy of the regime to serve as a counterweight to the Islamists; to divide the opposition, but particularly to play a clientelist role in the Berber region of Kabylia; to weaken and suppress this region or to agitate it when necessary. Now it is widely admitted that, before the creation of this party, a meeting took place between its 'future' top leadership and the patron of the secret services, Minister of the Interior, Larbi Belkhir. The leadership of the RCD has continuously played the role of speaker on behalf of a government faction or army clan.

After having been rejected by the electorate in the aborted legislative elections, the RCD leader, Said Sadi declared that he was dealing with the wrong people ('Je me suis trompé de peuple!'). Accordingly, he came out strongly in favour of the interruption of the electoral process and the intervention of the army. Thus, together with the PADS (Ettahaddi), the RCD provided essential support for Boudiaf and his HCF. The two parties formed the real pillars of the short-lived RPN, a populist movement created by Boudiaf in the hope of mustering a base for himself and weakening the political parties opposed to him. It was not until the last stage of the HCF, when it felt abandoned after the assassination of Boudiaf, that the RCD tried to disassociate itself from the authorities. Yet it seems still to be under the influence and manipulation of the secret services, and it reflects the ideas of the army 'hawks' in its discourse.

After the results of the June 1990 local elections, following which the RCD received less than 4% of the votes and the FIS over 54%, the two party leaders, Said Sadi and Abassi Madani, were brought into a televised confrontation. The FLN, which received 28% of the votes stayed away from this confrontation. On this occasion Said Sadi threatened Abassi Madani with: 'We will not let you get through!'. Sadi's threat proved serious, as witnessed by the interruption of the December 1991 general elections and the subsequent army intervention. This was in fact a clear indication of Sadi's role as spokesman for the army hard-liners. Said Sadi has been seen by many Algerians not as representing simply a political organisation born of political pluralism, but rather as an 'official' speaker on behalf of the Berber region of Kabylia which, from time to

time, he threatens to mobilise towards civil war. He does so despite the fact that his impact on the region is not that important, as demonstrated by the crushing defeat he suffered at the hands of the FFS, which swept the entire region during the legislative elections of December 1991.

As the RCD appeared 'very small' for an ambitious leader like Said Sadi, the latter, with the help of the authorities and the mass media, embarked on the creation of a 'wider' movement in which he hoped to assemble all 'the patriot republicans'. Thus on 25 November 1993, some 5000 Algerians met around Sadi to create an anti-Islamic gathering, the *Mouvement pour la République* (MPR), which declared its opposition to any rapprochement between the authorities and the Islamists. By creating the MPR Said Sadi demonstrated his intention to pursue his ideas whatever obstacles stand in his way. Yet he failed to realise that a mutation from the RCD to the MPR would cause him problems, particularly that of convincing his base to accept the dropping of the 'Berberist' cause (which would appear in the eyes of his militants as high treason). Even if he succeeds in bringing some Berberist voters to the MPR, he will still have to face the contradictions within this movement. The movement is likely to end in failure.

But for the present time Sadi and the RCD and for that matter the MPR, are still useful tools for the hard-liners of the regime. The man himself, having played all his cards, will end up a political skeleton.

The Parti de L'Avant Garde Socialiste (PAGS-Ettahaddi). This is the oldest political party in Algeria, as its roots go back to the birth of communist parties in Europe. Initially it constituted a fringe of the French Communist Party. During the Algerian War of Liberation it played an insignificant role, and it was not until 1956 that a number of its militants moved over to the FLN.

After Algeria's independence in 1962, the Algerian Communist Party, le Parti Communiste Algérien (PCA) was disbanded by Ben Bella in 1963, to re-emerge three years later under the name of the Parti de l'Avant Garde Socialiste (PAGS).

Thanks to the suspicions the conservative tendency of the FLN held towards Boumedienne's 'socialist' orientation, the latter relied on the PAGS in order to carry out his ambitious programme and legitimise his authority. The PAGS was highly influential in student circles and led an 'unofficial' parallel life with the FLN.

After the death of Boumedienne and the surfacing of the right-wing faction of the FLN, particularly with the designation of Chadli as president, the influence of the PAGS began to wane. The party then went back to 'clandestinity' and started to issue veiled criticisms of Chadli's liberalisation measures. In fact it provided what it called 'critical' support to Chadli's regime. With the 'democratisation' process that followed the 1988 bloody riots, the PAGS came back into the open. It participated in the June 1990 local elections but failed to win any seats. Given its insignificant weight and lack of influence over Algerian society, it decided to boycott the legislative elections of December 1991. Together with the RCD, it called for the interruption of the electoral process and the intervention of the army. It subsequently provided unconditional support to Boudiaf, his HCE and the RPN.

Heavily infiltrated by the *sécurité militaire* (SM)—the secret police—the PAGS

has insignificant grassroots support, but its anti-Islamist discourse has been loudly publicised by the mass media. Being at the heart of the '*Eradicateurs*' and playing an agitating role, the PAGES has, since 1993, become known as Ettahaddi (the challenge). Yet, in spite of the exaggerated media attention it receives, Ettahaddi is without an audience. Ettahaddi and the RCD, together with the leadership of the General Union of Algerian Workers, have now come to be known as the 'Republicans'.

The Sécurité Militaire (SM). Being aware of the dangers of an army *coup d'état*, Colonel Houari Boumedienne, who himself seized power through a bloodless *coup* in June 1965, thought of counterbalancing the ever threatening army by strengthening Algeria's secret services the SM. As the army was essentially composed of soldiers and officers who originated from the eastern part of Algeria, Boumedienne endeavoured to offset this by leavening the ranks of the SM with elements particularly recruited from the Berber region of Kabylia and the Oran region of western Algeria. Through the Kabyle elements he could both counterbalance the army as well as control any potential threat that might come from seething Kabylia.

The SM leader from 1962 to 1979, a Kabyle named Abdellah Khalef, known as Kasdi Merbah, was assassinated in August 1993, which indicates the extent of divisions within this murky organisation. After its 'official' dissolution by Chadli in 1989, this 'Thought Police' has gradually become uncontrollable and even more dangerous, as it infiltrates all forces at work on the Algerian political scene. This includes the army, political parties, and in particular, the mass media. Its pivotal role has been to spread confusion and rumours, as well as defamation against potential opposition leaders.

At the moment it looks as if civilian society will never succeed in structuring itself properly. Whenever a movement begins to emerge, the SM reacts by creating one or more similar associations—smoke screens to sow confusion and chaos. The short-lived FFS2, the Coordination Nationale of the Mouvement Culturel Berbère (MCB), and the Groupe Islamique Armé (GIA), are but a few examples. FFS marches are not simply characterised as being against a 'police state' and an '*integrist* Republic', but also by calling for the abolition of the secret police. This and the continuous intransigence of the FFS towards successive regimes, made this party the first target for devastating attacks by the SM particularly under the cover of the RCD.

Moreover, the appearance in October/November 1993 of clandestine commando groups in which observers saw the hand of this or that faction of the SM aimed perhaps at sowing terror in the Islamist camp, aggravated the chaos even further. Thus, the Organisation de la Jeunesse Algérienne Libre (OJAL), and the Organisation Secrète pour la Sauvegarde de la Révolution Algérienne (OSSRA), are two organisations about which little is known, but which threaten to revenge all the 'acts of the *intégristes*'.

Many ask about the 'incursions' observed in the Berber region of Kabylia, which presented an occasion for calls for the creation of armed self-defence groups, especially by the RCD leader Said Sadi. The FFS had earlier warned

against these acts of provocation and propaganda in Kabylia. In the collective mind of the Algerians, civil war means Kabylia against other regions of the country. Kabyles versus Arabs!

The Conciliateurs

The '*Conciliateurs*' are those political formations which demand from the regime a return to the electoral process and respect for popular legitimacy, as well as engagement in a global dialogue that would include the ex-FIS. These demands are shared by political formations from different horizons. They include the HAMAS Movement of Mahfoud Nahnah and the NAHDA Movement of Djabellah Abdellah on the Islamic camp; the FLN of Abdelhamid Mehri and the Mouvement pour la Démocratie en Algérie (MDA) of Ahmed Ben Bella on the nationalist side; and finally the FIS of Hocine Ait Ahmed of the democratic opposition. The latter's political ideals are in clear opposition to those of the two previous movements.

Politico-religious parties such as HAMAS and NAHDA, whose political agendas and objectives—the ultimate establishment of an Islamic state in Algeria—are identical to those of the FIS, were created by the regime and the SM, in order to split the Islamic movement. Similarly, the secular RCD was created with the objective of weakening the FIS and to play a clientelist role in Kabylia. These satellite parties, however, failed to meet the aspirations of the regime as their electoral weight proved insignificant. HAMAS and NAHDA are yet to rid themselves of the complex of the FIS's overwhelming victory. Since the interruption of the electoral process and the incarceration of the FIS leadership, the two parties have endeavoured to seduce the FIS's grassroots supporters but their efforts so far seem to have been in vain. Despite the openly declared objectives of HAMAS and NAHDA, the regime has always worked to bring them to the forefront of the political scene. For example, in December 1993 the NAHDA leader, Djabellah Abdellah, declared that his movement rejected the 'Platform for National Consensus', elaborated by the CDN, because it did not start with '*Bismi Allah*' (in the name of God). Djabellah Abdellah castigated the attitude of the secular parties which he considered to be 'anti-constitutional' and among the 'worst enemies of democracy'.¹³

The FLN: from 'power' to 'opposition'. In 1962 Algeria numbered some 10 million inhabitants. By 1994, the population has almost trebled to reach 27 million. Three-quarters of these were born after independence. These young people do not know the colonial era or the War of Liberation. In return they have suffered thirty years of 'FLN authority', which provokes, among most of them, a feeling of rejection. This was well illustrated in the FLN's defeat in both the local and general elections of 1990 and 1991.

Certainly, differences between the *nomenklatura* in power, heirs of FLN's nationalism, and the partisans of the Islamic republic, are not ideologically as deep as it seems. During the Boumedienne era (1965–1979) and that of Chadli (1979–1992) some *Walis* (regional governors) did not wait for the arrival of the FIS to ban alcohol, mini-skirts and long hair for instance. And by adopting the

National Charter of 1976 and the Family Code of 1984, the FLN deputies demonstrated that they are a clear match for the Islamists in that domain.

Meanwhile, the FLN had been a military party, led by colonels and heads of Military Regions. Kaid Ahmed, Mohamed Salah Yahiaoui and Mohamed Cherif Messadia all had military careers in the shadow of Boumedienne. It was not until the return of Abdelhamid Mehri at the head of the FLN after the events of October 1988, that this party took on a new civilian patron. And when, in March 1989, *army patrons symbolically presented their 'resignation' from the FLN Central Committee*, they seemed to mark a turning point in Algerian political life. Apparently henceforward the FLN and the army would be divorced.

The consequences of the army's move were decisive and the two bodies (the FLN and the army) have drawn some immediate advantages. The FLN thought it would no longer have to defer to the army over its important decisions, especially in its conferences where high-ranking officers traditionally forced decisions. The army, on the other hand, wanted to distance itself from a seriously discredited party, which was thought to have been buried for ever. Yet, if the FLN has progressively 'succeeded' in its own mutation, the army is still seeking a way out. The army cannot forgive having been somehow abandoned by the FLN. The latter appears to have remained faithful to the line traced since December 1991: it remains in opposition and will not return to power except through the ballot box. The army patrons were amazed to see the FLN refusing to endorse the military decision to interrupt elections. The military has remained structurally the same, while the FLN has undergone change. The arrival of Abdelhamid Mehri at its head was the first sign. He is a man who has never belonged to the army. The case of former Prime Minister, Mouloud Hamrouche, is even more serious in the eyes of the military. He is an army officer and the son of a martyr, who wanted to turn the army away from politics. Being a reformer, Hamrouche has been waging a hard battle against conservatives in the FLN in order to impose his tendency within an apparatus heavily conditioned by monolithic practices and vision. He hopes to revive the FLN with more dynamic and younger elements.

The FLN is now struggling to consolidate its image of an opposition political party, after having been the pillar of the system. The double boycott of the National Conference for Consensus and of the military-installed parliament, the Conseil National de Transition (CNT) has completed the divorce between the regime and the party of Abdelhamid Mehri. The FLN Secretary General is being accused of agitation in order to promote and then dominate other political parties such as HAMAS, NAHDA and the MDA of Ahmed Ben Bella. In fact there still exist many sociocultural affinities between the rank and file of the FLN and those of the FIS, HAMAS, NAHDA and the MDA.

*The FIS: democratic opposition.*¹⁴ The FIS was founded in September 1963 in opposition to Ben Bella's dictatorial regime. Since then it has been calling for the establishment of a democratic system and for respect for human rights. The FIS is a social-democratic party whose discourse, despite its name, has never referred to Marx or to class struggle. The party won 25 seats in the first round of the aborted legislative elections of December 1991, coming ahead of the FLN and sweeping over the entire Kabylia region. It stood against the interruption of

the electoral process and the *coup d'état* that followed. This led the party to become the target for attacks from the HCE and its satellite political parties, particularly the '*Eradicateurs*'.

Eternal opposition has been considered the hallmark of the FFS and its leader, Hocine Ait Ahmed. Yet contrary to this reputation, Ait Ahmed is not intransigent by nature. He simply has principles which he refuses to compromise. Democracy has always been his perpetual struggle. It is because Algeria has been permanently ruled in an authoritarian manner that he found himself in opposition for 30 years. With the first signs of democratisation in 1989, he returned to Algeria to lead the struggle against the 'police state' and a possible '*Intégriste* republic', as well as the much feared SM.

After the interruption of the electoral process and the installation of the state of siege, the FFS called for a genuine dialogue. A dialogue with the army, because it is the one group which possesses real decision-making powers, and a dialogue with the political parties that enjoy the people's confidence. The FFS was reluctant to speak to the HCE, insisting instead on the involvement of the army in the dialogue because it holds the keys to the future. The army must talk to all the parties and not only the FIS. It must also guarantee the implementation of any agreement reached. Accordingly, in December 1992, the FFS stopped responding to invitations for dialogue from the HCE. Later the party withdrew from the dialogue with the CDN, which it considered not to be independent, but guided by the HCE. Finally, on 10 January 1994, the FFS was the first political party to decide not to participate in the national conference of 25–26 January, arguing that the democratisation process was seriously compromised. For the FFS the future of the regime seemed to be more important than the future of the country. The party considered that the national conference as it was conceived 'appears a vital necessity for the regime...It means the army can avoid the perils of direct management...to keep its political hegemony and the privileges of power'.¹⁵ The consequences, according to the FFS, were that, as envisaged the conference simply constitutes a bridge towards a new authoritarian period. 'We return again to the process of legitimisation based on a single regime, single language and single thought. We build a "democratic" and "republican" state in the shadow of Islam as the religion of the state, and Arabic as the only national and official language.'¹⁶

For Ait Ahmed: 'The political parties have been called upon to approve the results of a family conclave of the ruling *nomenklatura*...For two years the authorities promised to return to the democratic process...and now they are opening another three-year transition period.'¹⁷

Unlike the plethora of other political parties that have mushroomed after 1989, the FFS was created outside the regime and in opposition to it. For the three decades of its life, the FFS has always remained faithful to its ideals: those of struggling for a genuine democracy which would guarantee political and cultural pluralism as well as respect for human rights. It remains the only political formation not to be manipulated and corrupted by the regime.

The army: from colonels to generals

Since its independence in 1962, Algeria has been led by the army.¹⁸ Ahmed Ben

Bella was brought to power by that part of the army stationed on the Moroccan and Tunisian borders, under the command of Colonel Mohamed Boukharouba, known as Houari Boumedienne. Three years later, in June 1965, Boumedienne himself toppled Ben Bella through a bloodless *coup d'état* and set up 13 years of direct military and Jacobinist dictatorship. After his death in December 1978, the choice of his successor went to a high-ranking officer, Colonel Chadli Bendjedid who, until then, was the Commander of the Second Military Region (Oran). Chadli's departure in January 1992, was the result of a silent *coup d'état* which installed the collective leadership of the HCE to manage the country's affairs for a transitional period of two years.

The army's 'official' retreat from the 'political scene' in March 1989, by deciding to withdraw from the H.N Central Committee and preserve its 'neutrality' with regard to the opposition political parties, was in no way taken seriously. After all it was the army which had forced Chadli to resign. The collective leadership of the HCE was under the control of the powerful Major General Khaled Nezzar. There were also three army officers out of the eight CDN members.

The failure of the national conference of January 1994 led to direct military rule of state affairs through the nomination of General Liamine Zeroual as the new Algerian president. He also kept the post of Minister of Defence, a portfolio which was abandoned by Chadli to Major General Khaled Nezzar in 1989. If the arrival of Zeroual cannot be seen as a surprise, his hold on the post of Minister of Defence is a 'fake surprise'. In fact, if everyone agreed to the candidacy of Zeroual for the presidency, his replacement in defence raised problems within the General Staff. A good number of the military leaders did not accept his heir apparent, General Mohamed Lamari, a hawk. Failing to agree, they reached a compromise, permitting Zeroual to accumulate both portfolios.

Within the army, some have always dreamt of assuming direct power. But a number of high-ranking officers fear that army's direct implication in political affairs could end badly. After all, the Algerian army is not a group isolated from the rest of the society. It is a popular army divided by the same cultural and ideological currents which split the civilian society. There is only a façade of unity. Hence, some army officers, such as Major General Khaled Nezzar, General Mohamed Touati and General Liamine Zeroual argue in favour of an opening of dialogue with the FIS. Others, such as General Mohamed Lamari, Head of the General Staff, are opposed to such dialogue, and call for open confrontation with the Islamists. They are apparently supported by a number of colonels and commanders who are conscious of becoming the first victims of an Islamist victory. At the moment the army's strategy lacks clarity. On the one hand it is fighting armed Islamists, and on the other hand it has been in continuous contact with the incarcerated Islamist leadership. Zeroual himself has admitted meeting Abassi Madani and Ali Benhadj in December 1993. Rumours have been circulating about Zeroual and the retired General Rachid Benyelles meeting the incarcerated FIS leaders on 23 January 1994.¹⁹

The war which is opposing security forces to armed Islamist groups has serious consequences for the army. Some 800 soldiers are reported to have deserted in 1993, twice the number presumed for 1992.²⁰ At the same time

Islamist 'contagion' within the army could take on alarming proportions. The '*Eradicateurs*' too have their factions within the army. General Mohamed Lamari—a powerful man who leads 25 000 troops engaged in an anti-terrorist struggle—and the patron of the SM General Mohamed Mediane, are considered to be supporters of confrontation with Islamist groups. The promotion of the Chief of Staff, Major General Mohamed Lamari, to the newly created rank of Army Corps General, on the eve of the fortieth anniversary of the start of the War of Independence, 'coincided' with Zeroual's announcement of the failure of the dialogue with the leadership of the FIS and his declared 'determination' to crack down on terrorism. Indeed, this was a clear signal that the '*Eradicateurs*' were gaining the upper hand in the army.

It is clear that in the face of the 'aggressiveness' of the Islamists, the near paralysing of the state and the inability to constitute a credible civilian authority, and the weakness and isolation of the democratic forces, the 'choice' appears to remain only with the army!

Today, Algeria is once again witnessing bipolarisation. But this time that of violence. On the one hand armed Islamist groups are gradually gaining ground; on the other hand an isolated and discredited regime is unable to mobilise the population.

The resignation of the government of Redha Malek, succeeded on 11 April 1994, by the former Minister of Equipment, Mokdad Sifi, carries a particular warning. Redha Malek had become too talkative. The army General Staff issued a clear message through Liamine Zeroual: it is the military, and not civilians, who are responsible for the management of the crisis. And it is they who decide on the attitude to be adopted with regard to the Islamist groups. The departure of Redha Malek was a continuation of the previous 'cleansing' at the summit. It is paradoxical that Redha Malek, whose diplomatic career was particularly appreciated by the Americans, was forced to resign. His 'resignation' came two days after a 'letter of intention' was handed over by Algeria to the IMF as a prelude to the signing of an agreement that would open the path for new loans and a rescheduling of Algeria's external debt. Redha Malek's mission was by then virtually accomplished. The military, anxious not to have their protégé become too important, forced him into early retirement. By distancing himself a little belatedly from the '*Eradicateurs*', Redha Malek failed to persuade of his loyalty to the army which was then leaning towards dialogue with the Islamists. The fact that he had described Islamist groups as 'barbarians', 'traitors', and 'anti-nationalists',²¹ had irreversibly placed him among the '*Eradicateurs*' and their supporters of all-out security and hostility to dialogue with the ex-FIS. This attitude was awkward for the military hierarchy, which is, more now than at any other time, determined to maintain an appearance of unity and cohesion.

Before his forced resignation, Redha Malek was exposed by the press to attacks from the RCD leader, Said Sadi. Belaid Abdeslam before him, as well as Sid Ahmed Ghazali, had also been targets for Sadi's attacks in prelude to their 'resignation'. This offers a clear indication of the role of the RCD in Algeria's political puzzle.

The Islamists: Djaz'arists and Salafists

In October 1988, when young Algerians thronged the streets of Algiers to express their frustration and anger against the regime, they did not do so in the name of Islamic ideals. It was not until a week later that the Islamists started to come forward, particularly after Chadli's invitation to some religious leaders, apparently to help him defuse demonstrations on the streets.

In fact the history of the FLN is punctuated by similar guarantees given to the Islamists. Thus, Ben Bella, in Mao's collar, banned the marketing of alcohol; Boumedienne chose Friday, the day of prayer, as the new weekend day; and finally Chadli promulgated the 1984 archaic Family Code which turned every Algerian woman into an object.²²

In 1989 the regime legalised the FIS and other politico-religious movements and let them besiege mosques and transform them into political forums, allowing preachers to inflame youths with sermons of justice, revolt and blood. With five prayers a day and one oath on Friday, the Islamists hold five meetings every day and one conference every week.

Today's brand of Islamism is not spontaneous generation, but rather is a product of the system which it is apparently fighting. Algerian Islamism is not an accident of history. It is the result of an exploding alchemy, a mixture of a discourse based on the *Ulama's Islah* (reform) of the 1930s, borrowed from the theses of the Egyptian spiritual leader Mohammed Abdu, godfather of the *Salafiya*, which particularly impressed the FIS leader Ali Benhadj, and that of Michel Aflaq, which serve as an authoritative source for Arab *Baathism*. This cocktail was served by the system in a glass moulded in Marxism, a theory fashionable to the liberation movements of the 1950s and 1960s.

Integrisme has been prepared on the ruins of nationalist and socialist ideologies, which proved their inability to face up to the economic and social challenges of the country. Besides, political Islam, just like any other extremist ideology, nourishes itself essentially on poverty and hopelessness. Economic insecurity breeds fear, and fear breeds intolerance and violence in Algeria just like anywhere else.

In order to remain in power, and in the face of its failure to meet the people's expectations, the Algerian state has turned to Islamic legitimisation notably by asking religious dignitaries to attest that their regimes are essentially in conformity with Islam. Accordingly, in a country where there is no prestigious religious institution comparable to Al Azhar in Cairo, Zeituna in Tunis or Qarawyin in Fez, the state built an Islamic university at enormous cost in Constantine, the capital of eastern Algeria and between 1984 and 1989 imported two Egyptian *Ulemas*, Mohammed Al Ghazali and Youssef Al Qardawi, both close to the Muslim Brotherhood.

The presence of these two at the head of this institution was supposed to demonstrate, the 'good Muslim' character of the Algerian state and therefore discredit the criticisms of the radical Islamic groups. The two Egyptians have, however, contributed to the formation of cadres of re-Islamisation movements which we eventually find in the FIS and then in the armed Islamic groups after the dissolution of the FIS in March 1992.

The Djaz'arists

Beside the underprivileged, the Islamic movements have recruited an important number of their militants and cadres from among the young elite in the mass educational institutions. These well qualified young people face a lack of job outlets that correspond to their qualifications and meet their aspirations, as well as a lack of access to any posts of responsibility, which are controlled by the *nomenklatura* at the expense of any meritocratic promotion. Members of this 'counter elite' have made their presence felt in the FIS tendency known as the *Djaz'ara*,²³ (Algerianisation or Algerianists), led particularly by Lounis Belkacem (known as Mohamed Said) and the petrochemical engineer, Abdelkader Hachani. The latter were the architects behind the FIS victory of December 1991, as they convinced their party to participate in the legislative elections, despite the incarceration of its principal leaders, Abassi Madani and Ali Benhadj.

This movement (the *Djaz'ara*) hopes to become ruler of the country by gradually Islamising the institutions and political vocabulary and favouring social promotion of qualified young generations. However, their agenda does not really contain a revolutionary dimension which would offer underprivileged masses more than vague promises of 'justice according to the Quran'. A number of these Algerianists, who were elected in December 1991, fled to Europe or the United States after the interruption of the electoral process and the dissolution of the FIS.

Between these elements and the most Arabist and Islamist tendencies of the FLN, which Algeria's humour dubs 'barbéfélène' (bearded FLN), there are contacts which suggest an eventual coalition around a conservative and re-Islamisation project. Such a project would maintain the essential of the existing social hierarchies while permitting a certain rotation of elites.

The rural guerrillas led by Mustapha Bouyali between 1982 and 1987, resisted the army and the *Gendarmerie* for five years. With the October 1988 events and the legalisation of the Islamic movement, the struggle was transferred to the 'political' front. The arrest of the FIS leadership, however, forced some Islamists to resort, once again, to taking up arms. Hence, the appearance of the Mouvement Islamique Armé (MIA) under the leadership of Abdelkader Chebouti, a former lieutenant of Mustapha Bouyali.

Yet while the MIA was determined to follow up the armed struggle, the *Djaz'ara* tendency decided to take part in the legislative elections. Later, the interruption of the electoral process and the dissolution of the FIS led to an apparent break-up of the MIA, giving birth to a more radical group determined to continue the armed struggle against the regime until the achievement of its objectives.

The Salafists

In contrast to the *Djaz'ara* tendency which aspires to take power 'legally' through elections, the *Salafists* work for the establishment of an immediate Islamic state after the taking of power by arms.

The decision by the *Djaz'ara* to participate in the legislative elections and the

frustrations that followed seem to have led the hard-liners of the MIA to break away and form a more determined armed group known as the 'Groupe Islamique Armé' (GIA). The latter opposes any gesture of reconciliation with the authorities and has been engaged in a merciless armed struggle against the regime and all those who support it. It claimed responsibility for the assassination of former Prime Minister Kasdi Merbah and a number of intellectuals and journalists, as well as foreign nationals.

Since the annulment of the legislative elections, Islamist 'political' leaders have been overtaken by uncontrollable underground groups including the MIA, the GIA, the Mouvement pour l'Etat Islamique (MEI), and lastly the Armée Islamique du Salut (AIS), which appeared at the end of 1993, claiming to be the armed branch of the FIS. Today, it is the autonomous GIA which seems to take the more radical stand and which refuses any compromise or concession. The latter, often led by virtual illiterates, is a gathering of small groups led by local Emirs (princes) exhausting their authority in violence. Thus, while the MIA has led selected attacks against the 'forces of repression' with the hope of compelling the state to liberate jailed Islamist leaders and recognise their election victory, the GIA is 'determined' to take on all those who support the 'military junta' in power, whether military or civilian, Algerians or foreigners.

A number of GIA leaders are known as the 'Afghans', for they fought beside the Afghan *Mujahideen* against the Soviet army. It appears that these Afghans joined Afghanistan thanks to funds distributed by Islamic organisations, often Saudi, which operate under the cover of humanitarian organisations. Several channels permit Algerian 'Afghans' to reach Afghanistan via France, Turkey or Saudi Arabia. It is said that the International Islamic Relief Organisation, sponsored essentially by the Saudis, receives Arab mercenaries in Peshawar, trains them and supplies them with arms. It also finances the FIS and other Islamist movements around the world.²¹

The present situation gives the impression that the Algerian authorities are in the process of abandoning the ground to the Islamists, indicating the beginning of the Islamisation of society, imposed by fear. Islamic armed groups, who are gradually gaining more ground, seem to exercise real control over some regions of the country. In most cases it is the GIA, the most radical Islamist group, which appears at the origin of the hardening of the position. Known to have been infiltrated by the SM, this organisation has gained notoriety. It recruits among the illiterate and unemployed, whose hopelessness and desire for social revenge are more powerful than any concern about whether or not they are manipulated. The apparent indifference of the authorities may serve as an indication of a frightening conclusion, anticipating a future political agreement with the Islamists. The terms will be that the authorities abandon society to them in exchange for preservation of their own interests. How can the Islamists doubt their strength while they are making their own law in and around Blida, a military region *par excellence* housing the biggest and most important military barracks in Algeria?

Today, political Islam seems set on the invasion of both the political and social fields. But this time it seeks the myth of a lost paradise in a disorderly contemporary world. Heaven is to be sought in 'returning to original Islam'. As

for the Algerian people, they have become prey to both the military junta and the Islamist galaxy.

Mass media and intellectuals

With few exceptions, and despite a period of opening towards democratisation and freedom of expression, there has been no real intellectual or mass media revolution in Algeria. The majority of Algerian intellectuals have been unable to comprehend the problems of the society in which they live. And the journalists have remained almost entirely incapable of freeing themselves from the discourse of bygone regimes.

Like the army, political parties and other organisations, the Algerian mass media are heavily infiltrated by the SM, whose main objective is to sow confusion and dismantle all the forces that struggle for the installation of genuine democracy.

In fact, certain elements in the press continue to excel in the art of flattering the holders of authority. But as soon as these latter lose their power of decision making, the press drags them in the mud. The example of Abdelaziz Bouteflika is revealing. A member of the Oujda Group which usurped power in 1962 and which is at the origin of the present Algerian tragedy, Bouteflika is also one of the *barons* of Boumedienne's dictatorial regime. He served as Algeria's Foreign Minister for 16 years (1963-1979). As soon as there were rumours, at the national conference of January 1994, of his candidacy for the post of president, the press hastily portrayed him as a 'reformer' and a 'democrat' who had been in 'favour of democracy' even under the dictatorship of Boumedienne! He was being described as a man of progress and modernisation who symbolised rupture with the 'Chadli regime'.²⁵

Some journalists abusively sign editorials in government papers to denounce democrats, while overlooking the suffering of the Algerians at the hands of the regime. Despite the international outcry against the violation of human rights in Algeria,²⁶ torture in the country does not appear to be either a national or a political issue. It has given rise to no thought, provoked no debate in the mass media, which remain silent and complacent. The mass media conform to Edmund Burke's formula: 'morality depends on geography'. A journalist can tolerate bad behaviour in his country while condemning it elsewhere.

Most of the 'intellectuals' who are supposedly 'murdered' by the Islamists did not merely welcome the military junta but also participated in its activities. A considerable number of them served as members of the CCN and the *Conseil National de Transition* (CNT), puppet parliaments set up by the regime after the interruption of the electoral process and the January 1994 National Conference for Consensus respectively while those who had been 'chosen' by the people were thrown into the Sahara camps. Accordingly, it is legitimate to argue that the murdered 'intellectuals' were not assassinated as poets and intellectuals but as politicians.

Supporting journalists and 'intellectuals' who are threatened by extremists is a moral duty, but not at the price of silence towards massive violations of human rights, a term which has yet to find its way into the Algerian press. To denounce

torture, humiliation and contempt in no way means playing into the hands of the extremists. There are also 'intellectuals' in the camp of the Islamists. In the Sahara camps there are hundreds of people who are not terrorists, but merely the product of 30 years of dictatorship, nepotism and corruption. They are victims of the ideology of those who still lead Algeria today.

France and the current Algerian crisis

French foreign policy with regard to Algeria seems determined by an obsession with its own security. The official attitude towards the Algerian crisis is almost entirely monopolised by the Interior Minister, Charles Pasqua, eclipsing the French Foreign Minister, Alain Juppé, in this domain.

Relying on right-wing hype, Charles Pasqua raises the spectre of an eventual exodus towards France if an Islamic regime were to be established in Algeria. To exacerbate this fear, Pasqua declared on 4 August 1994, that an eventual flow of refugees from the southern shores of the Mediterranean should not simply be the concern of France but of all the countries of the Mediterranean Basin. Now French diplomacy with regard to Algeria appears to be divided between those who initially condemned the interruption of the electoral process and called for a political solution based on dialogue between the regime and opposition political parties, and those who applauded the interruption of the electoral process and persist in their support for the military regime. Charles Pasqua belongs to the latter camp. He insists that Western diplomacy should follow the French lead with regard to the Algerian crisis. Accordingly, he has sharply criticised the USA, the UK and Germany for their 'leniency' and 'complacency' with regard to the Algerian Islamists.

The official French attitude seems particularly anxious about an eventual overflow of the Algerian disease not only into neighbouring countries but also into France itself. In fact French inner cities as well as the suburbs are seething with thousands of sons of immigrant workers who live on the margin of society because of unemployment and poverty. They represent a failure to integrate them into French society. These youths present a fertile ground for Islamist propaganda. Indeed, there exist powerful Islamic organisations in France which carry out proselytism among these youths. The Union des Organisations Islamiques de France (UOIF), financed by the petrodollars of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, assembles some 207 declared associations, and controls more than 150 mosques.²⁷

Conclusion

The political turning point in recent Algerian history was marked by the October 1988 riots. The repression that followed opened the path to a new constitution which 'abandoned' the single party system in favour of multipartyism. The hidden intention of such reform, however, was to pass from a single-party regime to a system of a dominant party; that which would effectively prevent

power rotation from occurring. The caste in power has resisted genuine reform, hoping to maintain the situation in its favour.

The principal aspiration of the people, however, was a real demise of the FLN's monocratism and a change of leadership through free choice of new representatives able to transform the conditions of their daily lives.

The opposition, composed of the FIS in the Islamic camp and the FFS in the democratic camp, developed a theme of the moralisation of public life, and demanded that new elites, formerly excluded from political responsibility, should be given access. These contesting movements succeeded in training a new generation which the regime had been unable to integrate. In the face of this dynamic, the state found itself deprived of a social base. Therefore, the state army chose force as its sole language, and imposed on everyone a brutal alternative! Either support a corrupt 'mafia' system, or line up behind an Islamism which, in principle, repudiates democracy.

The present tragedy in Algeria pinpoints the isolation and therefore the weakness of the actors who do hold democratic values. Algeria's political tradition has continuously been bathed in totalitarianism. This constitutes an essential component of the country's recent history, including the contemporary history of its struggle for independence, which witnessed a party claiming to be sole owner of the state and society, monopolising the word and establishing its legitimacy on a mythologisation of the past.

The period from 1992 to 1994 is full of dates that register restrictions, oppression and all signs of instability. Since the annulment of the legislative elections, Algeria has become a theatre for assassinations and clan fighting. There have been at least two contradictory projects for society. The regime has endeavoured to strengthen both projects with the objective of prolonging the instability and confusion that are its *raison d'être*. Now the country is moving from one transition to another, an interlude of several years without stable or credible state institutions.

The recrudescence of terrorist acts and the cycle of violence and repression have favoured political schism and accentuated the division between followers of a global political solution and adherents of continued domestic repression and confrontation. As in 1992, Algeria is still divided between '*Reconciliateurs*' and '*Eradicateurs*', '*Dialoguistes*' and '*Anti-Dialoguistes*'. On the one hand the new Head of State, General Liamine Zeroual, initially seemed to be opting for the 'realist line' by calling for a negotiated global political solution. On the other hand the forces that provided the ideological substructure for the interruption of the electoral process, and the drive belt of the regime that followed, are mobilising themselves and hoping to give the impression that they have completed their divorce from the regime.

Algeria today presents symptoms of a long illness whose contagion could reach neighbouring countries and beyond. There is no apparent solution. On the one hand, Algeria is a state characterised by illegitimacy and divided between 'hawks' and 'doves'. On the other hand, Islamists with a goal of total hegemony—and who are themselves torn between 'radicals' and 'moderates'—are fighting to replace the existing regime. The real losers in this 'complicated' game are certainly the Algerian democrats.

Notes

- I am very grateful to Dr Peter Burnell, University of Warwick, for his valuable comments.
- ¹ Mohand Salah Tahi, 'The arduous democratisation process in Algeria' *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 30 (3), September 1992, pp 397-419.
 - ² In 1964, the 11th Congress confirmed the 'Arabo-Islamic tradition of the Algerian people', established in its sovereignty after 132 years of colonial domination. The measure was clumsy and for a start, negated the existence of Berbers with their own culture and identity. Today, the linguistic question is included in the process of the struggle for democracy.
 - ³ Mohamed Harbi, *Le 11^e, Mirage et Réalité*, Paris: Éditions Jeune Afrique, 1980; Harbi, *Aux Origines du FLN: Le Populisme Révolutionnaire*, Paris: Éditions Bourgeois, 1975; and Harbi, *L'Algérie et Son Destin: Croissants Ou Citoyens*, Paris: Éditions Arcantere, 1992, esp p 48.
 - ⁴ *El Watan* (Algiers), 12 January 1994.
 - ⁵ *Le Matin* (Algiers), 29 June 1993.
 - ⁶ *El Watan*, 12 January 1994.
 - ⁷ *Le Monde*, 27 January 1994.
 - ⁸ *El Watan*, 23 January 1994.
 - ⁹ *Liberté* (Algiers), 8 February 1994.
 - ¹⁰ *La Nation* (Algiers), 64, 23-29 March 1994.
 - ¹¹ See his interview in *Le Figaro*, 30 March 1994.
 - ¹² The February 1989 Constitution forbade the creation of parties based on religious, linguistic or regional characteristics. The RCD, like the FIS and other formations of the Islamic movement, are all anti-constitutional parties.
 - ¹³ *Liberté*, 1 January 1994.
 - ¹⁴ See Hocine Ait Ahmed, *L'Affaire Meclit*, Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 1989; Patrick Gérard, 'Ait Ahmed: Bagiant délit du Berberisme', in *Grands Procès de l'Afrique Contemporaine*, Paris: JAPRISS, 1990, pp 139-151; Pierre Monbeig, 'Une opposition politique dans l'impasse: le FIS de Hocine Ait Ahmed', *La Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée*, 65, 1993, pp 125-140.
 - ¹⁵ *Le Monde*, 12 January 1994.
 - ¹⁶ *El Watan* 11 January 1994.
 - ¹⁷ *Guardian*, 26 January 1994.
 - ¹⁸ There is an excellent work on the Algerian army by Abdelkader Yefsah, *La Question du Pouvoir en Algérie*, Algiers: ENAP, 1990; Abdelkader Yefsah, 'L'armée et le pouvoir en Algérie 1962-1992', *La Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée*, 65, 1993, pp 77-94; Lahouari Addi, *L'Algérie et la Démocratie*, Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 1994.
 - ¹⁹ *Le Point*, 1116, 5 February 1994, p 45.
 - ²⁰ *Liberation*, 24 November 1991.
 - ²¹ *Le Monde*, 13 April 1994.
 - ²² Ahmed Rouadja, *Les Frères et la Mosquée*, Paris: Karthala, 1990; Franck Fregosi, 'Islam et Etat en Algérie, du Gallicanisme au fondamentalisme', *La Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée*, 65, 1993, pp 61-76; and Hugh Roberts, 'Radical Islamism and the dilemma of Algerian nationalism: the embattled Arians of Algiers' *Third World Quarterly*, 10 (2), 1988, pp 556-589.
 - ²³ The *Dja, a'ina* favour a gradual assumption of power through 'democratic' elections.
 - ²⁴ *Le point*, 1116, 5 February 1994, p 47.
 - ²⁵ *Le Matin*, 24 January 1994.
 - ²⁶ On 1 January 1994, a US human rights organisation, Middle East Watch, published a 67-page report on the violation of human rights in Algeria.
 - ²⁷ See *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 1565, 3-9 November 1994, pp 40-42.

Churches and politics in Latin America: Catholicism at the crossroads

JEAN DAUDELIN & W E HEWITT

Since the European discovery of the New World in 1492, Latin America has emerged as a predominantly Roman Catholic region. Indeed, both the discovery itself and the subsequent exploration and development of the region were undertaken as a joint effort of church and state. At face value, the aims of these parties were starkly different. For the state, the goal was territorial and material acquisition. For the Church, Latin America represented virgin territory for the conquest of souls. Yet, from the early days of Spanish and Portuguese conquest through the early to mid-19th century (when many countries of the region gained their independence) to well into the 1900s, both parties worked hand in glove to ensure that their respective objectives could be met. For their part, the colonial and later national governments counted on the moral support of the Church to maintain a status quo favouring the political and economic elite. The Church freely offered this support in return for state assistance in maintaining Catholic religious hegemony.

As efficient as it was, this mutually beneficial arrangement began to change, however, by 1950 when, in many countries, clerics, religious and laypersons began to question the Church's political role as the defender of privilege. Some even became active in support of change-orientated social movements and programmes designed to improve the lot of the poor, whose welfare had not largely improved in the post-World War II period, despite record rates of economic growth in the region.

During the 1960s, these forms of Church-based activism took on a particular urgency, as a wave of military-backed bureaucratic-authoritarian governments assumed power in country after country. Most of these regimes claimed to be acting on behalf of the rational interest, as part of an effort to develop a more stable political system and ensure future economic progress. These objectives were sought, however, with little regard for the economic well-being of the poorest sectors of society, and in an atmosphere of severe repression. Those who opposed government policies—including many within the Church—were jailed, deported or killed.

Such practices strained the relationship between the institutional Church and the state to the breaking point in many countries. Indeed, sanctioned by the increasingly progressive stance of the region's bishops—as shown in documents released in the wake of their 1968 meeting in Medellín—some national churches went so far as to commit themselves institutionally to an oppositional role in favour of those most disadvantaged by military rule.

As part of this new stance, known officially as the 'preferential option for the poor', members of the hierarchy in a number of countries criticised government social and economic policy. Church bodies produced research revealing the errors and harm caused by government action (and/or inaction), while Church-sponsored mass movements, such as the base Christian communities or CEBs (*comunidades eclesiales/eclesiais de base*) gave strong voice to those excluded from the new restricted political arena.

Where it occurred, such activity endured for well over a decade in the region. By the early 1980s, however, with the gradual return to civilian rule in most countries, the Church's activist stance began to fade. Where it still exists, the political rhetoric of the Church is generally less strident than in the past, and many Church-based movements—especially the CEBs—seem to be either disappearing or pursuing a more moderate political path. In place of a more radical political agenda, moreover, has appeared a new emphasis on the devotional side of Catholicism.

This shift back to the political status quo within the Latin American Church appears to have caught many observers unaware, and has to date been the subject of scant inquiry. In response, this paper represents a preliminary attempt to remedy this deficiency, by offering a general analysis of the scope and causes of recent Church change in the region.

Our basic argument is that recent Church actions represent a strategic orientational shift conditioned by a new set of realities both within the institution, and within the wider religio-political realm. This thesis is explored with reference to the region as a whole,¹ with particular emphasis, however, on those venues where key directing elements within the institutional Church moved furthest to the left, and are now in the process of moving back—Brazil, Chile and Central America (especially Nicaragua). We begin the analysis with an overview of the rise and fall of the progressive Church in the region, as it has been interpreted within the existing literature. This is followed by a discussion of those specific factors which we believe have figured most prominently in conditioning this turn of events.

Context and interpretations of the rise and fall of the activist Church

In the dozen or so years following 1960, military leaders assumed control of national governments in a large number of Latin American countries.² In and of itself, this was not such a novel development. Historically, the militaries of the region have seen themselves as the frontline defenders of constitutionalism, and have from time to time, in one place or another, intervened to restore social and political order. In the past, however, such interventions were relatively short-lived. What makes the post 1960 wave of military takeovers unique is that the regimes which emerged became well entrenched—many, in fact, endured for well over 20 years.

The factors precipitating the latest wave of military interventions were many. Basically, however, they may be traced to growing military unease with attempts by civilian governments in the 1950s to move away from capitalist economic models and planning, and towards innovations associated with Soviet-style

communism—eg the creation of state industries, social welfare schemes or programmes designed to redistribute income. Military leaders were also preoccupied by the more liberal political agenda of the civilian governments of the time, in particular their tendency to allow—even encourage—popular organisation and dissent. To military leaders in many countries these types of experiments constituted a clear and present threat to the security of the nation.

One by one, military establishments moved to remove this threat—Brazil in 1964; Argentina in 1966 (and then again in 1976); Peru in 1968; Ecuador in 1972; Chile in 1973; and Uruguay in 1973. With the exception of Peru and Ecuador (where the military took a more populist line), most of the regimes installed were decidedly right-wing in orientation. In the literature, they have been described more precisely as 'bureaucratic-authoritarian', as their primary goal was to combat the forces threatening national security by a) restoring integrity to the political process (principally by purging 'communists' from the political arena); and b) encouraging rapid economic development through careful state planning and enhanced integration within the world market (through increased trade). Such measures were undertaken, it should be emphasised, at considerable cost to the general population. Political parties were either shut down or subjected to severe limitations, and dissident elements and organisations, such as labour unions and other advocacy groups, were banned or severely restricted. Those actively opposing military rule were dealt with harshly. Many voluntarily went in to exile, while those who stayed behind to fight risked imprisonment, torture, or even death.

Rising economic fortunes in the late 1960s and early 1970s in Latin America helped to legitimise the military and its bureaucratic-authoritarian agenda in most countries. Indeed throughout this period, the region as a whole posted economic growth rates far above the developing world average, fuelled primarily by the expansion of domestic industry. Consequently, military regimes were able to press on with their conservative economic programmes, cultivating outside financing of mega-projects, developing stronger international trade linkages and building up the national infrastructure. All these measures paid off handsomely, but managed to benefit the few at the expense of the mass in the region. In sum, the military's plans called for a 'fattening up' of the region's economic pie, before any significant redistribution of the spoils of advanced industrialism could be considered. This entailed considerable hardship for lower-class workers who continued to earn meagre wages, while their bosses earned some of the highest salaries in the world.

With the advent of worldwide recession and the oil crisis of the early to mid-1970s, the economic boom began to fade, however. Markets for Latin American exports began to shrink, while rising fuel costs cut deeply into profits, workers' wages, and ultimately, government revenues. Many national governments found themselves unable to cover debt repayments from earlier borrowing on international markets; most continued to borrow to help cover their increasing shortfall in revenues. Before long, most countries of the region had built up a massive debt load, while at the same time possessing few resources to help them repay anxious creditors.

The inability of many a military government to respond to this crisis, coupled

with the growing misery of the poorest segments of the population, eventually served to delegitimise their regimes. After the mid-1970s, military leaders slowly dismantled the authoritarian structures they had mounted and handed power back to civilians. Indeed, by 1985, democratic elections had been held in virtually all the former dictatorships of the region. Today, almost all the countries of Latin America possess democratic constitutions, although in practice, political elites have continued to rely on authoritarian measures to ensure social control.

The political developments since the early 1960s form the backdrop for Church change in recent years. As mentioned earlier, the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America had for much of its long history sought to defend its institutional interests and integrity through collaboration with economic and state elites. Only after 1950 did social activism emerge as a significant force, when elements within the Church began to encourage the larger institution to adopt the concerns of the socially disadvantaged and abandon its historic ties to elites. This tendency intensified following the wave of military dictatorships which shook the region after 1960. In response to the repression orchestrated by the new regimes, a number of national churches moved towards direct advocacy of the lower-class cause as standard operational policy. In direct confrontation with both the military and other elites, these churches embarked upon a systematic campaign to encourage change in the political, economic and social status quo, utilising both the rhetoric of widely distributed statements and position papers, and concrete action strategies and programmes designed to promote and protect the interests of the poor. In Brazil, for example, the Church supported various national and regional agencies and 'commissions' designed to support the rights of specific interest groups in society—including peasants (the Pastoral Land Commission), and native peoples (Indigenous Missionary Council)—as well as human rights generally (Peace and Justice Commission).

Throughout the region, the base Christian communities or CEBs became a particularly important force for institutional activism. Some accounts suggest that in the heyday of the phenomenon (during the late 1970s and early 1980s), there may have been as many as 3 to 4 million people active in many tens of thousands of these groups located in rural areas or on the outskirts of the region's larger urban centres.¹ While some were directed towards more devotional ends (prayer, baptism, etc), many were reported to have been involved in explicitly political activities such as petitioning campaigns to improve the local quality of life, workers' strikes, and organising mass rallies.

A number of explanations have emerged to account for the origins and eventual scope of the Church-based activism which emerged in the postwar period. Based upon a conflict-orientated understanding of society (and as often as not referring explicitly to the work of Marx and/or Gramsci) liberation theologians—among them Gutiérrez, Betto and Leonardo Boff²—have tended to see Church innovations in the political sphere as prompted by base level activism rooted in popular dissatisfaction with the politico-socioeconomic status quo. From within the social scientific realm, other researchers have adopted a different tack, drawing upon a Weberian conception of organisational structure, power and interest, and focusing more upon the Church as 'institution'. According to this view, the political activism of the Church has followed a dynamic and

agenda set by institutional leaders, partially in response to socioeconomic or political circumstances, but in the end designed to enhance institutional power.⁵ A limited number of 'synthetic' approaches, finally, have also appeared. These attempt to improve upon the base level and institutional perspectives by pointing to a more dynamic—even dialectical—relationship between grassroots demands and institutional interests in the emergence of progressive Church politics.⁶

Despite their many differences, the adherents of these various positions do agree on one thing; they have largely accepted the intensity and the scope of Church activity during the 1970s and early 1980s as a 'given', with some maintaining an unabashedly optimistic tone regarding the Church's potential in this regard.⁷ Yet it is increasingly dawning on many specialists that the previous assessments of the effective mobilisation capacity and the influence of the popular Church are problematic, and that a fundamental reorientation in political direction is now taking place within the Church generally.⁸

This turnaround is most evident in those countries where the institutional Church had been most active in the cause of social justice. In the case of Chile, for example, Stewart Gambino has noted the growing rift in political orientation between bishops, and between bishops and the clergy, resulting in a move away from involvement in more controversial matters.⁹ Klaiber notes a similar process occurring in Peru.¹⁰ While, under the left-leaning military regime (1968–1980), the institutional Church rather comfortably pursued the social justice cause, moderates and conservatives have since assumed prominence, forcing the left wing of the Church into retreat. Commenting on Brazil, Drogus also points to a new conservatism within the institutional Church,¹¹ one which may in the end alienate those activists remaining among the clergy, laity and religious adherents. Progressivism is similarly in peril in the churches of Central America. Crahan's religious survey of the region points to splits between progressives and others in the Church in most countries.¹² Even in Nicaragua, claims Williams,¹³ the influence of progressives within the national Church has declined significantly in recent years. All the while, in many areas, there has been a turn towards greater promotion of devotional practices and groups—such as Charismatic Renewal or *Opus Dei*.¹⁴

Those researchers who have to date considered the origins of these developments have tended to focus on Vatican policy as the principal causal variable.¹⁵ There is certainly much to commend this interpretation. While resistance to a progressive orientation in Church organisation and sociopolitical involvement was present even during Vatican II, the election of John Paul II and his choice of Archbishop Ratzinger to head the Secretariat for the Doctrine of the Faith has certainly inaugurated a new era at the centre of the Catholic Church. Many authors have seen John Paul II's papacy leading the Church back to an anti-modern attitude, profoundly alien even to the Enlightenment.¹⁶

Practical indications to this effect are numerous: the Vatican's discussions and progressive rapprochement with fundamentalist Msgr Lefebvre, the harsh sanctions imposed on liberal European theologians and the refusal to consider any democratisation of the Church's structure or even to discuss the ordination of women. Most important, however, from the Latin American standpoint, have been 1) the Vatican's strong criticism of liberation theology which, among other

things, has long advocated that the Church adopt a more open governance structure, and take a more aggressive stance against social injustice; 2) the disciplinary measures it has taken against liberation theologians themselves, in part because of their open flirtation with secular Marxism; and 3) the Vatican's unequivocal condemnation of attempts by progressives to set up a justice-orientated 'parallel' Church structure in Nicaragua and other countries. In other words, the nice words about the poor and loud calls for social justice which the Pope uttered in his many trips to the region appear to have been increasingly divorced from a Vatican policy which, for all practical purposes, has been directed at weakening the very sectors of the Church which could have given these words a substance.

The nomination of bishops, a Papal prerogative, has provided the most effective tool for the implementation of the new conservative agenda. With Catholic dioceses still organised in a most centralised and, in effect, authoritarian fashion, a change of bishop can, and has proved to have a tremendous effect on the orientation of pastoral work. One of the best known examples is the Archdiocese of Recife (Brazil). Here, in one of the poorest ecclesiastical territories in the region, the progressive bishop Helder Câmara was replaced upon retirement by a conservative, who quickly dismantled the social action infrastructure painstakingly built up by his predecessor.¹⁷ Conservatives were also nominated as bishops or auxiliary bishops in Santiago, Lima, Managua and Salvador (Brazil), while 'moderate' clerics were chosen for various new dioceses created in 1989 in the São Paulo area.¹⁸ Indeed, over the 15 years of his papacy, John Paul II has put new men— for the most part moderates and conservatives— at the head of close to 50% of Latin America's dioceses.

At the same time, many factors suggest that a 'Vatican conspiracy' explanation for declining Church activism in Latin America is inadequate. To begin with, it ignores the Church's specific institutional goals and objectives, as well as the resources at its disposal to implement them. Moreover, it leaves aside careful consideration of the recent— and dramatic— modifications in both the religious and sociopolitical milieu in Latin America.

This latter set of environmental factors has been examined in recent studies of the subject,¹⁹ leading to a reconsideration of the mainstream views of the progressive experiment. We feel, however, that the first set of factors, relating to the fundamental strategies of the Church has not been given enough weight in these analyses.

In response, we argue here that 1) recent Church change must be considered as a strategic undertaking, one in keeping with previous goals and objectives of the Church in Latin America; and 2) this strategic undertaking has resulted from both the chronic inability of the progressives to redirect the institutional agenda within those national churches where they were most active and the need on the part of institutional leaders to respond to threats to continued religious hegemony posed by the growing Protestant movement as well as the need to avoid influence-threatening controversy in an increasingly pluralistic political environment. The component elements of this thesis are developed in turn in the sections which follow.

Strategic continuity and the quest for influence

Since the 1960s, much discussion has taken place within the Catholic Church worldwide regarding its fundamental purpose in society. Within the Latin American region, this discussion has resulted, to some extent, in diverse practice at the national and local (diocesan) level. Nevertheless, institutional behaviour has remained remarkably consistent, and a fundamental continuity in the basic objectives of the regional Church may be discerned.

As Bruneau points out,²⁰ the Catholic Church's basic orientation in Latin America has been and continues to be the maintenance of societal influence. Such influence, claims Bruneau, is essential if the Church is to carry out its primary this-world mission of 'salvation'. While such objectives are nowhere stated explicitly, they are nevertheless implicit in the huge scope of the questions and problems that Latin American Churches consider in their meetings and seek to act upon. This quest for societal relevance still appears to give its coherence to the institution's attitudes and practice, as well as to the thrust of the bishops' interventions.

The Church's goal of influence, furthermore, has traditionally been pursued using a mass appeal strategy. To the Church, Latin America has 'always' been the religion of the vast majority of the region's people, and it has done all in its power to ensure that this remains the case. This can be seen clearly in its sacramental policy, which continues to be pursued with particular zeal. For example, since the 1970s the number of baptisms per priest has consistently varied from 150 to 200 each year. The annual total of baptisms over the same period has risen from 7.2 to 8.5 million. Such numbers suggest that a mass appeal approach to religion is still adhered to.

Recently adopted proselytising methods also attest to the continued use of the mass appeal strategy, with growing interest throughout the region in the use of 'television marketing'. In Brazil, by far the largest country of the region, the Church is proceeding rapidly with a plan for a network of Catholic stations to deliver the Church's message to all parts of the country.

The mass appeal strategy, it must be added, has since its inception been directed by a relatively small institutional elite. Indeed, there has been little attempt to 'democratise' the institution, despite the mandate of Vatican II to open the Church's doors to the full participation of its members. Certainly, progressive policies calling for greater lay participation in Church governance were implemented in a number of dioceses, and in some, advisory assemblies were convened. The extent to which this change has meant an effective democratisation, however, is in doubt. Nowhere have such assemblies been given any real power. We have yet to hear about a diocesan policy with which the bishop, however progressive, disagrees; nor has any bishop been overruled by an assembly. At best then, the workings of these progressive dioceses fit José Comblin's description of the progressive priests' relationship to their flock: from the authoritarianism of fear to the authoritarianism of love.²¹ Where the priest's power was formerly rooted in his presumed connection to God, in other words, it has found a new basis in paternalistic concern.

What this basic continuity of objectives and means suggests is that the recent

shifts in the Church's political orientation are less reflective of broadly-based and deep seated ideological commitments, and more likely to represent institutionally guided operational strategies designed to achieve the Church's primary objective of influence. Just as in the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s, the base Christian communities and other progressive movements were encouraged as a 'mass appeal' tool to achieve influence, today much official interest has arisen in pursuing a more traditional course to influence by emphasising more traditional forms of religious involvement among the laity. The question which remains to be answered is why this shift in operational strategy has occurred at this particular time.

Intra-institutional struggles

One set of factors driving the retreat to the devotional sphere stems from inside the institution. Simply stated, the Church's conservative turn to some degree may be interpreted as the result of a long-term inability on the part of the region's progressive wing firmly to set the agenda within their national churches.

The fact is that the changes that took place in many churches in the 1960s and 1970s were not the result of a radicalisation of the whole Catholic hierarchy and clergy. The 'Church of the Poor' or the 'Progressive' or 'Popular Church' never meant the whole Catholic Church. In fact, even in the most 'progressive' national churches of the region (Brazil, Nicaragua, Chile), only a minority of bishops and priests would have defined themselves in this way, and only a fraction of the Catholic flock identified with them. It is consequently as a *social movement* active within the bounds of the Church that the progressive push should be understood.

The relative prominence of the progressive Church under the military regimes, the CELAM Conferencia General del Episcopado Latinoamericano documents from Meadellín and Puebla, the many instances of Catholic bishops and priests taking public stands against human rights abuses and in favour of social justice, as well as the fact that most studies of the Church focused on its progressive sector, produced the impression of a hegemony of the progressives over Latin American Catholicism as a whole. The quality, timeliness and sheer size of the intellectual production of the liberation theologians also played an important role in conveying this impression. In fact, however, the political hegemony of the progressives was often wrongly inferred from their remarkable dominance of the theological discourse in the region.

The inability of the progressives to carve out a significant space within their churches is, however, painfully evident. Even the CEBS—the most important innovation associated with the progressives and the fundamental element of its social base—never achieved an importance commensurate with the progressives' own claims. Many factors were at play here, the most important being their small number,²² limited politicisation²³ and continued dependence on the hierarchy,²⁴ as well as the limited scope of effective empowerment they made possible for their members.²⁵

Nor were the 'mainstream' moderates and conservatives who were frequently the majority within the Church particularly impressed with the progressives' effectiveness in securing the Church's position in society. When all was said and

done, the progressives delivered no more faithful, no more seminarians, no more priests than their more traditionalist counterparts.²⁶ In fact, they did not even deliver the 'natural communities' of the poor, constituencies to which they were supposedly best adapted. In a recent interview, the well-known progressive archbishop of São Paulo, Cardinal Paulo Arns, admits that the progressives' rhetoric turned people away.²⁷

In the end, it is fair to say that to some degree the progressives' apparent hegemony in Latin American Churches lasted only as long as the conservatives and the moderates permitted. In Nicaragua, as early as 1980, progressives were already becoming marginalised within the hierarchy.²⁸ In Brazil, Ralph Della Cava similarly noted serious signs of weakness in the progressive camp by the mid 1980s.²⁹ In El Salvador, the progressives and their base communities have always been barely tolerated by the hierarchy and were never a force with which the latter had to reckon.³⁰ When pressure was exerted by the Vatican and when the moderates in the hierarchy showed a willingness to reconsider political involvement, the progressives were simply unable to muster enough leverage to resist the change.

Threats from within the religious arena

Alongside these internal factors, the Church's return to the devotional has been strongly conditioned by the changing religious arena in Latin America. Increasingly, Catholicism is being confronted by an aggressively proselytist religious enterprise in the form of evangelical Protestantism—especially Pentecostalism, a particularly expressive brand of the faith which emphasises active celebration of the Holy Spirit through song, prayer, and sometimes faith healing and speaking in tongues.

What immediately strikes the eye when examining this new religious force is the large and growing army of cadres it possesses. In a typical Latin American parish, where there is at most one priest, several Protestant pastors are active. According to O'Shaughnessy, there are now at least 54 000 Protestant missionaries working in Latin America from North America alone.³¹

On the Catholic side, the opposite trend is occurring; the number of priests in relation to the population has fallen steadily between 1973 and 1990, from 1.6 to 1.2 per 10 000 inhabitants. It is true that the number of vocations (priests in training) has been growing since 1973, from 0.27 per 10 000 inhabitants to 0.54 in South America and from 0.52 to 0.67 per 10 000 in Central America. But even if all these students were to become and stay priests, which is doubtful, they would still replace only one half of the current—and fast aging—staff. The number of men and women adherents has also not kept up with population growth. In fact, the only positive statistic is the increase in 'catechists' (according to the *Statistical Yearbook* of the Church, a non-ordained and at least part-time Church worker), especially in Central America and Mexico. Many work in the parish as lay auxiliaries to the local priest, are often involved in stimulating and directing base Christian communities. Their numbers, however, are still low, reaching barely 10 000 for Mexico and Central America and 14 000 for the whole of South America.

For the Protestants, steady growth in missionary strength in the region has paid off handsomely. In Central America, estimates of Protestant strength vary from country to country. Crahan estimates that Honduras is now roughly 8% Protestant, with Guatemala at 25%–35%.³³ Daudelin claims that the figure for Nicaragua is about 20%,³⁴ while Stein states that El Salvador is now 15%–20% Protestant.³⁵ In South America, there are also a number of major venues for Protestant growth, according to observers. Stoll relates that Protestants account for about 20% of the overall population in Chile.³⁶ The figure offered for Peru is 5%,³⁷ and for Brazil, around 17%–20%.³⁸ Accounting for the bulk of the figures, all observers agree, are the various Pentecostal groups operating from networks of chapels distributed throughout Latin America.

Analysts point as well to the large growth rates within these groups. O'Shaughnessy states, that during the last half of last decade, the number of Latin American adherents to Protestantism grew from 25 to 50 million.³⁹ Stoll claims that, in most countries, the Protestant movement has grown exponentially, with Protestants set to claim the majority of the population by the year 2000 in a number of areas, including Brazil, Puerto Rico, and Guatemala.⁴⁰

It must be pointed out, however, that such numerical claims are tenuous. To begin with, they are typically based on Protestant Church estimates, which may be exaggerated. As Stoll himself suggests, '... it bears repeating that church growth estimates have to be approached with great caution'.⁴¹ Indeed, in the case of Brazil for example, there is a considerable gap between Protestant Church estimates of Protestant strength and those related by that country's world-respected statistical agency, the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE). While Church figures count up to 20% of the population as Protestant, the IBGE has consistently counted under 10%— and a large proportion of these are members of Brazil's long established mainline Lutheran church. In addition, predictions about growth rates tend to be statistically exaggerated thanks to ignorance, error, or both. Typically, these predictions are based on percentage increases derived from rather low starting numbers. For example, while it may be said that a church which has seen its membership increase from 50 000 to 100 000 has grown 100%, after eight years the same increase of 50 000 added to the new base of 500 000 reveals a much lower growth rate of 10%. In other words, constant growth will ultimately yield a smaller and smaller actual growth rate. One cannot, then, make predictions about growth based simply on previous percentage increases—as many authors appear to have done. Thus, as Cleary suggests,⁴² it may be somewhat wrongheaded to talk about a Protestant explosion in Latin America. Rather, what we are seeing is a movement that has grown steadily over the course of the century.

A second observation which must be made is that, contrary to conventional wisdom, the Protestant movement is not monolithic in religious terms. For example, while Pentecostals are certainly the fastest growing segment, and are quickly making up a large proportion of the collectivity, a large number of diverse groups are also represented, from Baptists to Mormons to Methodists to Jehovah's Witnesses. Even Pentecostalism, Cleary suggests,⁴³ is not a unitary phenomenon, with various strains espousing a variety of religious viewpoints.

Politically as well, there are important differentiations. Much evi-

dence does of course suggest that evangelical Protestantism is allied with conservative interests. In Central America, Stein's research has pointed to a general tendency towards the right wing among Protestant adherents in most countries,⁴⁴ while Stoll suggests a similar pattern exists for Latin America as a whole.⁴⁵ Interestingly, however, most observers also point to the existence of fundamental political splits within the movement. In Central America, within both Protestant and Catholic religious realms, Crahan states 'the role of churches and church people ... today is highly complex, and does not lend itself to easy categorization'.⁴⁶ In Guatemala, for example, Protestant political involvement has not always been welcomed with open arms by the right, while some Pentecostal churches have moved to concern themselves more with socio-economic issues. Daudelin also points out political divisions within Protestant groups in Nicaragua,⁴⁷ as does Klaiber in the case of Peru,⁴⁸ where at least some groups have moved towards social action. For the region as a whole, such splits have resulted in the formation of two distinct church conferences, one for those more socially involved churches (CLAI—the Latin American Council of Churches), and one for the more conservative churches (CONELA—the Latin American Confraternity).⁴⁹

But whatever the empirical or ideological dimensions of the threat, the Protestant advance appears to have had a chilling effect on the institutional Church. As sociologist W I Thomas has said: 'If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences'. For the Catholic Church, the consequence has been alarm about the threat to continued influence that the presumed Protestant invasion represents.

This preoccupation appears to have gripped both moderates/conservatives and progressives, albeit for different reasons. On the one hand, traditionalists see the Protestant advance as threatening because of its assault on culture—Catholic culture. On the other hand, progressives see Protestants more as a political threat to the Church's social agenda, because of their presumed support for the political right.⁵⁰ According to D'Antonio,⁵¹ some progressives have openly decried Protestantism as a right-wing force linked to US imperialism through the Central Intelligence Agency. Some, moreover, are using the fear of being relegated to a secondary position in the Latin American religious arena to their advantage, as a mechanism to resist the conservative policies of the Vatican. For example, liberation theologians José Comblin⁵² and Enrique Dussell⁵³ have stated that conservative Church policies will push the poor into the arms of the Pentecostals, and have thus attempted to convince the larger institution to change its course.

In the rush to respond to the Protestant threat, however, the moderates and conservatives appear to have prevailed, resulting in a gradual move away from left-wing mass appeal strategies of the past (such as the CIBS), and more towards strategies emphasising the devotional—in effect mimicking Protestant tactics.

Some within the hierarchy have been content to concentrate their efforts on this front on political and economic elites. The penetration of new groups such as *Opus Dei* is seen by these sectors as an efficient way to regain influence.

Yet this is a minority position which has not been endorsed by the majority

of bishops. While they too invest heavily in a pastoral of the elites and of the middle class, conservatives like Eugênio Sales (archbishop of Rio de Janeiro) feel that an effort also has to be made to resist the progression of the Pentecostals in the poorest segments of society. Hence their encouragement of Charismatic Renewal, with its emphasis on spiritual values, open celebration and direct communion with God.

Throughout the region, this would appear in fact to be the strategy of choice. While Martin has flatly stated that Catholic Charismatic groups are only a tiny minority in Latin America,⁵⁴ the evidence suggests otherwise. Cleary asserts that 'Catholic pentecostalism spread in Latin America like fire in a dry field',⁵⁵ with estimates of practitioners ranging into the millions. Indeed, Cleary notes, Catholic pentecostal groups exist in many countries as a form of base Christian community. In Brazil, reports from as early as 1983 indicate that the movement is growing extremely quickly, especially among the lower-middle class, while Hewitt's research in São Paulo suggests that many of the formerly politically progressive CEBs are increasingly turning to the Charismatic fold.⁵⁶

Political pluralism as a minefield

The currently liberalised political milieu of Latin America has also conditioned the course of many a national church in recent years, and will likely continue to do so. Within the political minefield which pluralism represents, the Catholic Church—if it is to have any chance of attaining its overarching goal of renewed influence—has to follow a carefully charted course. Controversy and divisive questions must be avoided; cohesion and clear direction maintained at all costs.

During the previous authoritarian era, the situation was much clearer. At the same time, for those more activist churches, it was a period of *artificial* visibility. Military dictatorships in countries such as Chile and Brazil offered national churches such prominence by barring most—if not all—other organisations from taking public stands. Thus, in many places, the Church effectively emerged as the 'voice of the voiceless'.

This is not to deny that tremendous courage had to be shown in these circumstances by those most actively involved in oppositional movements. As mentioned previously, in most countries, the progressives made up only a small minority of clerics, religious men and women, and lay people, and were more often than not barely tolerated by institutional leaders. The determination and courage shown by activist bishops, clerics and lay Catholics, however, does not diminish the artificiality of the situation created for the Church by the partial closing of the social and political field. Such artificiality was amply revealed when, as political liberalisation finally occurred in the 1980s, the Church's more activist voice was suddenly drowned by formerly 'voiceless' people organised into a myriad of political parties and social movements. From this point on, the more activist Churches became merely one political voice among many.

To this expanded competition was soon added the increased complexity of the issues involved. Most of the questions to which a simple, yes or no, moral answer could be given suddenly disappeared. Gone were the stances which could command the immediate agreement of the majority of the people. Gone as well

was the time when a moderate opposition was the only possible stand to take towards the government. In these complex times and circumstances, a clear identification of the Church with a given party, with a given cause, could be extremely costly in terms of popular appeal.

The Church appears to have quickly learned the lessons of this new reality. In the last Brazilian election, while some local priests and activist laypersons became involved with left-wing parties, the highest and most respected authorities of the Church decided to keep their choice unknown, while encouraging everyone to use their right to vote. In addition, the leadership of the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops (CNBB) has increasingly taken a vague stance on social issues.⁵⁷ The statement regarding the propriety of agrarian reform or the information describing the political systems alternatives for the 1993 referendum in Brazil on constitutional reform clearly show that the Church here is trying to stay far above 'petty' political debates.

These attempts at 'playing a role' in the crucial political and social debates of the time by putting the discussion on a higher level,⁵⁸ suggest that the Church, while still groping for influence, fears a real test of its capacity to influence the public debate. As it attempts to move through the political minefield created by pluralism, it will probably remain on a 'safe' neutral course.

Conclusion

The Catholic Church in Latin America has always been involved in regional politics. From the middle of this century, however, an important qualitative shift occurred in the type of involvement favoured. During the 1960s and 1970s especially, the traditionally conservative Catholic Church became involved in an effort to effect widespread social and political transformations in many countries. At a time when the vast majority of regimes were conservative and in many cases repressive military governments, the Church increasingly sided with the secular left on many social issues. By the 1980s, though, those more activist national churches began to slip back to a more conservative position on social change.

The political involvement of the Church throughout its long history in Latin America has been directed primarily at maintaining influence in society. This imperative, we would argue, led both to the activist turn of the 1960s and 1970s, and to the more recent political turnaround in the 1980s and 1990s. The timing of this move was conditioned by forces at work both inside and outside the institution. Certainly, an increasingly conservative Vatican played some role in the process, but this is only part of the story. The political retreat may be seen as primarily attributable to a combination of factors, including the general failure of the Catholic left firmly to set the social agenda of the larger institution, the need to respond to the Protestant invasion currently underway in the region, and a desire to set a more neutral political course and thereby avoid controversy, dissent and defection in an increasingly open political milieu.

Where will the Churches of Latin America move from this point? Certainly, the regional institution will not disappear from the political field altogether. What appears to be developing looks somewhat like a throwback to more

traditional church–state relations, in which social issues certainly have a place, but where institutional preoccupations are prominent. Furthermore, the typical attitude towards social issues is changing from an in-depth involvement towards an overarching intervention that stays above debates about specifics. For its part, the ‘preferential option for the poor’ as an orientation increasingly appears secondary to the Church’s need to maintain influence, and it may well lose what little meaning it has, if it is felt to threaten this.

Overall, events on this front bear continued watching—especially since few scholars appear to have acknowledged the current trend in the first place. Certainly, further explanation is required of some of the forces we have identified here: the inertia of the institution and its blind pursuit of influence; the intractable position of the hierarchy on internal ‘democratic’ reform; and, perhaps most importantly, the failure of the progressives to carve out a space within the larger Church. With the political shift of the Church to the right, another chapter in the history of the regional Church has been opened, providing opportunities for continued study and research on the relationship between religion and politics.

Notes

¹ As much as this is possible. In most respects, the Latin American region is extremely diverse, and this is no less true in terms of religious or specifically Catholic temperament. The ‘shift to the left’ cited above occurred to a far greater extent in some countries than in others. By the same token, some Churches are moving back to the right and centre at a slower pace—while one—that of Mexico—appears at the moment to be flirting with a more progressive stance. Nonetheless, we believe a regional trend may be identified, and it is to this phenomenon that we turn our attention. For an in-depth examination of individual cases, the reader is directed to the appropriate literature on the particular country in question.

The following discussion is based on an analysis developed by Pollock. See D Pollock, ‘Debt, development and democracy: recent trends in Latin America’, in P Blanchard & P Landstreet (eds), *Human Rights in Latin America and the Caribbean*, Toronto: Canadian Scholars’ Press, 1989.

² See P Cleary, *Crisis and Change: The Church in Latin America Today*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1985, p 104. Even with 3 to 4 million members, only a tiny fraction of the Latin American population would be involved in the crisis—perhaps somewhere between 1% and 2%.

³ See, for example, E Bello, *cris: Rumo a Nova Sociedade*, São Paulo, Paulinas, 1983; E Boff, ‘Theological characteristics of a grassroots Church’, in S Torres & J Eagleson (eds), *The Challenge of Basic Christian Communities*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1981, and G Gutierrez, ‘The eruption of the poor in Latin America and the Christian communities of the common people’, in *ibid.* Leonardo Boff resigned from the priesthood in 1992, in part because of Vatican criticism of his putatively ‘Marxian’ brand of liberation theology. He nevertheless remains an important figure in liberationist literature.

See especially, J C Bruneau, *The Political Transformation of the Brazilian Catholic Church*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1974, and *The Church in Brazil*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1982; E G S Lima, *Teologia Política dos Católicos e da Igreja no Brasil*, Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes, 1979; S Mamawane, *The Catholic Church and Politics in Brazil 1916–1985*, Stanford, CT: Stanford University Press, 1989.

⁴ M Adriance, ‘Agents of change: the roles of priests, sisters, and lay workers in the grassroots Catholic Church in Brazil’, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 30 (3), 1991, pp 292–305; M Dodson & J O Shaughnessy, *Nicaragua’s Other Revolution: Religious Faith and Political Struggle*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1990; D Lehman, *Democracy and Development in Latin America*, Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1989; P Vernoux, *People of God: The Struggle for World Catholicism*, New York: Viking, 1989; P Sigmund, *Liberation Theology at the Crossroads: Democracy in Revolution*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

⁵ R Della Cava, ‘A derrota da Igreja Progressista’, *Journal do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro), Caderno B, 11 July 1985, ‘The “People’s Church”, the Vatican, and Abertura’, in A Stepan (ed), *Democratizing Brazil: Problems of Transition and Consolidation*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989; Mamawane, *The*

- Catholic Church and Politics*, final chapter, V Paiva, 'A Igreja moderna no Brasil', in Paiva (ed), *Igreja e Questão Agrária*, São Paulo: Loyola, 1983, pp. 52-67; C Perani, 'A Igreja no Nordeste: Breves notas histórico-críticas', *Cadernos do CEAS* (Salvador), 94, 1984, pp. 25-45.
- ⁹ H Stewart-Gambino, 'Redefining the changes and politics in Chile', in E Cleary & H Stewart-Gambino (eds), *Conflict and Competition: The Latin American Church in a Changing Environment*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992, pp. 20, 40-41.
- ¹⁰ J Klaiber, 'The Church in Peru: between terrorism and conservative restraint', in Cleary & Stewart-Gambino, *Conflict and Competition*, pp. 88-90.
- ¹¹ C Drogus, 'Popular movements and the limits of political mobilization at the grassroots in Brazil', in Cleary & Stewart-Gambino, *Conflict and Competition*, pp. 64, 82.
- ¹² M Crahan, 'Religion, revolution, and counterrevolution: the role of the religious right in Central America', paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, Washington, DC, 9-11 August 1990.
- ¹³ P Williams, 'The limits of religious influence: the progressive Church in Nicaragua', in Cleary & Stewart-Gambino, *Conflict and Competition*, p. 129.
- ¹⁴ Sometimes known as Catholic Pentecostals. Charismatics meet in small groups for song, prayer and to give personal testimony of their faith. Some claim the ability to heal, and speaking in tongues is common. Members of Opus Dei also tend to emphasise the devotional, primarily by advocating the need to apply Christian principles to all aspects of one's day-to-day life and work. Members of the institution, including laypersons, priests, and seminarians are especially active as teachers in universities and training institutions.
- ¹⁵ H Cox, *The Silencing of Leonardo Boff: The Vatican and the Future of World Christianity*, Oak Park, IL: Meyer Stone, 1988; Della Cava, 'The People's Church'; P Lemoine, *People of God: The Struggle for World Catholicism*, New York: Viking, 1990; I Lesbaupin, 'O Vaticano e a Igreja no Brasil', *Comunicações do ISIR*, 9 (39), 1990, pp. 17-33.
- ¹⁶ M Clevener, *L'Eglise a perdu la raison*, Paris: Desclee, 1990; J B Labiano, *A volta à grande disciplina*, São Paulo: Loyola, 1988.
- ¹⁷ R van der Ploeg, 'Um olhar sobre a igreja do Regional Nordeste II', *Revista Eclesiástica Brasileira*, 48 (189), 1988, pp. 163-178; 'A Igreja dos pobres no Nordeste', *Cadernos do CEAS*, 132, 1991, pp. 61-71.
- ¹⁸ For numerous other examples, see the case studies in Cleary & Stewart-Gambino, *Conflict and Competition*.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*
- ²⁰ Bruneau, *The Political Transformation*.
- ²¹ J Comblin, 'Algumas Questões à partir da Prática das Comunidades Eclesiais de Base no Nordeste', *Revista Eclesiástica Brasileira*, 50 (1981), 1990, pp. 435-450.
- ²² The number of base Christian communities, purportedly the active cells of a renewed Church, appears to have been greatly exaggerated. There are no reliable censuses of the communities anywhere. An extrapolation based on the censuses of the Archdiocese of São Paulo, where they have been actively promoted by Catholic authorities, suggests, however, that a realistic number for Brazil would be around 10,000. See J Daudelin, 'Brazil's progressive Church in crisis: institutional weakness and political vulnerability', unpublished manuscript, 1992. Even if such advocates' numbers are used (ie 80,000-100,000 for Brazil) then membership would still represent only 3% to 4% of the population of the country (estimated in 1991 at 150 million). Brazil being the only large country of Latin America where the phenomenon has any importance, one must conclude that from a social scientific standpoint, the revolution the communities were supposed to represent for the Latin American Church never happened. Even from the bishops' standpoint, for whom they were not a revolutionary instrument but, more modestly, a means of regaining 'natural communities' (see Conferência Nacional dos Bispos do Brasil, *Plano de Pastoral de Conjunto 1966-1977*, Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Dom Bosco, 1967; 'Documento da CNBB sobre as Comunidades Eclesiais de Base', *Serviço de Documentação*, 15 (160), 1982, pp. 988-1002), they were not particularly useful.
- ²³ W E Hewitt, *Base Christian Communities and Social Change in Brazil*, Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1991; Perani, 'A Igreja no Nordeste'.
- ²⁴ P A R Oliveira, 'Mapeamento pastoral da Diocese de Catalus', Rio de Janeiro: ISIR, Programa de Assessoria, 1990.
- ²⁵ Drogus, 'Popular movements and the limits of political mobilization'; Comblin, 'Algumas Questões'; D Levine, *Popular Voices in Latin American Catholicism*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- ²⁶ This applies even to the case of progressive bastions like the theological institute in Recife and the seminary of João Pessoa in Northeast Brazil. See C Sartori, interview with Jean Daudelin, 23 August 1991, Bayeux Paratiba, Brazil.
- ²⁷ P E Arns, excerpts from an interview with Isto É, *Revista Eclesiástica Brasileira*, 52 (206), 1992, pp. 452-454.
- ²⁸ P Williams, *The Catholic Church and Politics in Nicaragua and Costa Rica*, London: Macmillan, 1989. 'The limits of religious influence'.
- ²⁹ Della Cava, 'A derrota da Igreja Progressista'.
- ³⁰ J Sobrino, interview with Jean Daudelin, 7 August 1991, San Salvador, El Salvador.

- ¹¹ I. N. O'Shaughnessy, 'Onward Christian soldiers: the case of Protestantism in Central America', in E. Sahliyeh (ed), *Religious Resurgence and Politics in the Contemporary World*, Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1990, p. 104. To some observers, this represents a recent North American invasion of sorts, perhaps designed to ensure US hegemony in the region. The fact is, however, that many variants of Protestantism—especially Pentecostalism—have roots in Latin America dating back decades. A large number of Protestant missionaries, consequently, are indigenous to the countries in which they operate.
- ¹² Data on Church personnel in this section are derived from the Vatican's *Statistical Yearbook of the Church* for the years 1973 to 1990. The last available issue was published in 1992.
- ¹³ M. Crahan, 'Religion, revolution, and counterrevolution'.
- ¹⁴ J. Daudelin, 'Corporatist intermediation in the religious field: Protestants and the state in revolutionary Nicaragua', paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association of Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Ottawa, 22–25 October 1992.
- ¹⁵ A. Stern, 'Religion and mass politics in Central America', paper presented at the Meeting of the New England Council of Latin American Studies, Boston, MA, 24 October 1992.
- ¹⁶ D. Stoll, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant? The Politics of Evangelical Growth*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990, p. 333.
- ¹⁷ J. Klaiber, 'The Church in Peru', p. 94.
- ¹⁸ Stoll, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant?*, p. 333.
- ¹⁹ O'Shaughnessy, 'Onward Christian soldiers', p. 104.
- ²⁰ Stoll, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant?*, p. 9.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*
- ²² Cleary, 'Evangelicals and competition in Guatemala', p. 179.
- ²³ F. Cleary, 'Conclusion: politics and religion—crisis, constraints, and restructuring', in Cleary & Stewart-Gambino, *Conflict and Competition*, p. 215.
- ²⁴ Stern, 'Religion and mass politics in Central America'.
- ²⁵ Stoll, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant?*, p. 19.
- ²⁶ M. Crahan, 'Religion, revolution, and counterrevolution', p. 2.
- ²⁷ J. Daudelin, 'Corporatist intermediation in the religious field'.
- ²⁸ Klaiber, 'The Church in Peru', p. 94.
- ²⁹ O'Shaughnessy, 'Onward Christian soldiers', p. 99.
- ³⁰ H. Stewart-Gambino, 'Introduction, new game, new rules', in Cleary & Stewart-Gambino, *Conflict and Competition*, p. 13.
- ³¹ M. D'Antonio, *Fall from Grace: The Failed Crusade of the Christian Right*, London, Deutsch, 1990, p. 168. As quoted in G. Macdon, 'In joust for Latin America, Rome seeks option for rich', *National Catholic Reporter*, 8 November 1991, p. 18.
- ³² F. Dussell, interview, *National Catholic Reporter*, 23 October 1993, p. 13.
- ³³ D. Martin, *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America*, London, Basil Blackwell, 1990, p. 130.
- ³⁴ Cleary, *Crisis and Change*, pp. 110–111.
- ³⁵ See 'Le Carismatica', *Vepi*, 1 June 1983, p. 70. W. E. Hewitt, 'Crisis and the Progressive Church in Brazil: what comes next?', paper presented at the XVIII International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association, Atlanta, GA, 10–12 March 1994.
- ³⁶ F. C. Bruneau & W. E. Hewitt, 'Catholicism and political action in Brazil: limitations and prospects', in Cleary & Stewart-Gambino, *Conflict and Competition*.
- ³⁷ Stewart-Gambino, 'Introduction, new game, new rules'.

NGOs, politics, projects and probity: a policy implementation perspective

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Development NGOs projects and politics

Although the 'discovery' of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), by the experts and institutions that collectively comprise the global 'development community', occurred only in the late 1980s, these organisations had been developmentally active in relatively significant numbers for years and, in some cases for decades.¹ However, what was genuinely novel was the rapid and sustained expansion of the non-governmental sector's involvements in an increasingly wide variety of developmental work across most of the South during that decade; an expansion that has been sustained into the 1990s. With those based in the North, known variously as Northern or as International NGOs (NNGOs or INGOs), and sometimes as BINGOS (big international NGOs—there is no standardisation of acronyms and these often seem to have proliferated more rapidly even than NGOs themselves), now greatly outnumbered by their southern counterparts (SNGOs), NGOs are currently estimated to reach 250 million people in the Third World, compared to the 100 million their activities 'touched' in the early 1980s.² Indicative of the rapidity of the non-governmental sector's expansion, now covering virtually the whole of the Third World, with the partial exception of the Middle East, is the fact that both total funding and total numbers of organisations can only be estimated. What is known is that collectively Northern developmental NGOs spend up to \$10 billion annually, that most Northern governments now channel 'tens of millions of dollars annually through their NGO communities', and that NGOs have, since the 1970s, displaced governments as the primary recipients of a number of categories of Official Development Assistance (ODA), most notably, and comprehensively those related to humanitarian relief and emergency assistance.³ Similarly, it is known that the 3000 or so NNGOs that the OECD has identified as developmentally active in the South are now complemented by between 30 000 and 50 000 SNGOs or grassroots support organisations (GRSOS), which are actively advising and channelling funds to the hundreds of thousands of grassroots or people's organisations (GROS and POS) operating at local level across the Third World.⁴

What these development NGOs actually do is very varied. The counterpart of expansion has been role diversification, with the sector's original specialism in relief and emergency work now counterbalanced by involvement in an increasingly wide range of development activities. These range from political advocacy and education (in both North and South), through support for people's move-

million in Latin America, 12 million in Africa and 60 million in Asia, 'based on the assumption that 10 000 can benefit from one project in Latin America, thousands in Africa, and hundreds of thousands in Asia, because of different population densities'. Although Julie Fisher rightly points out that such estimates of beneficiary numbers are possibly even more arbitrary than estimates of the numbers of NGOs operating in the Third World, more detailed figures for individual countries suggest that available overall estimates are not wildly inaccurate. For example, Fisher cites a study of 261 Guatemalan NGOs that revealed they were delivering or involved with a total of 1200 regional programmes, and that these organisations were claiming that the numbers of beneficiaries reached by their projects ranged from 200 upwards but averaged 38 000. In turn, these figures suggest that Guatemala's roughly 400 NGOs 'provide services to over 5 million people', out of a total population of just under 10 million people. Extrapolating directly from these figures, without allowing for variable population densities across the regions of the Third World, Julie Fisher suggests that 30 000 NGOs are providing services to 375 million people.⁸ Even if Guatemala's comparatively high population density is taken into account, the evidence suggests that the final overall beneficiary estimate would not be inconsistent with the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) recent suggestion that NGOs now reach 250 million across the Third World. This implies a comparable 150% expansion in NGO project activities and involvements in the South over the past decade.

If the central contention of this paper—that the indirect political impact of discrete NGO projects is cumulatively rather than individually significant—is correct, there is certainly ample available evidence indicating the growing quantitative impact of NGO project-related activities across most of the states of the South. Accordingly, what this paper seeks to review is the available evidence that might indicate that this quantitative impact is exerting, or at least is beginning to encourage, the cumulative qualitative effects that we hypothesise it might be engendering. This evidence, in turn, is sought in the well-established and empirically soundly based literature on the distinctive characteristics of policy-making processes in developing countries (DCs); a literature which has been strangely neglected to date in analyses of appropriate NGO roles in the securing of democratisation, good government and the types of governance practice that might institutionalise the emergence of effective civil societies in the South. This neglect seems all the more striking given that the central finding of this literature is that—viewed from the perspective of the vast majority of the people in DCs, namely the poor in general and the rural poor in particular—it is the mainly top-down experience of policy implementation, either through specific development projects or through service-delivery, that largely defines the parameters of what they experience and 'know' of national 'politics', at least between the elections that are still only imperfectly institutionalised in most of the states of the South. The insertion of NGOs into the policy and programme cycles of governments and their donors principally as project implementers places the sector in a strategic position, pursuing roles as policy mediators and service providers that may appear mainly economic in form but are as clearly perceived by their beneficiaries as political in their content.

It is through experience of the processes, including the biases of project implementation, that grassroots interpretations of the real meaning of citizenship are formed, and the contents of this citizenship are evaluated and judged by its 'consumers'. This point, in turn, indicates that any changes in the way project implementation is perceived to occur, including developments that at first sight appear to be purely technical or managerial, may well also be crucial to the 'on the ground' evaluation of the realities of otherwise abstract concepts, such as participation and democratisation. In short, project implementation through NGOs should be viewed, and studied, as a political phenomenon of significance in itself, and should be valued as such particularly by those who would wish the non-governmental sector to play a more central role in engendering more open and participatory political cultures in the South. Conversely, a project and service delivery role should not be marginalised as an adjunct to activities—from advocacy through citizenship education to lobbying—arbitrarily defined as 'more' political; nor should it be dismissed as a distraction from these more important 'political' missions.

NGOs and policy implementation

In a volume published in 1980, which conveniently pre-dates the present situation of widespread state withdrawal from policy implementation and service delivery, Merilee Grindle pointed out how 'the implementation process is especially central to politics in the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America'. In particular, this understanding that implementation was 'the crucial phase of the policy process in most developing nations' acknowledged the effects engendered by central characteristics of political regimes and policy contexts in the South, notably the cumulative impacts of 'the remoteness and inaccessibility of the policymaking process to most individuals and the extensive competition engendered by widespread need and very scarce resources'. With the 'agents of linkage' between state and society, namely political parties and pressure groups, either firmly controlled by coercive regimes or coopted by clientelistic ones, the institutions viewed as central to mobilising and processing the political demands of active civil societies were recognised to be either weakly institutionalised and poorly resourced or simply non-existent. Typically, this literature underlined the fact that 'there are few organizations in existence that are capable of representing the interests of broad categories of citizens and formulating policies responsive to their particular needs. Those few that are effective in this role tend to be the creatures of wealthy and powerful groups such as bankers, industrialists, and landowners.' With parties and pressure groups largely irrelevant to the political concerns and interests of the mass of the population, the policy implementation process inexorably emerged 'as a focus of political participation and competition in the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America'.⁹ The result was a 'Third World' policy process that structured societal interventions in ways that concentrated societal attention and involvement on implementation rather than on policy formulation, in a manner and to a degree quite distinct from familiar Western patterns.

Lacking institutionalised consultative mechanisms for influencing policy at the

stage of formulation, those affected were forced to present their particularistic demands retrospectively, at the implementation stage, to the administrators whose remit it was to apply and enforce the policies and programmes arbitrarily defined and selected by national governments. The correlate of arbitrary policy making in frequently uninstitutionalised and personalistic neo-patrimonial regimes often only insecurely stabilised by networks of patron-client relationships, was an equally or—given the diversity of interests and the operational leeway among local and regional political and bureaucratic elites—even more marked tendency to implementational arbitrariness. The inevitable outcome was a high level of bureaucratic and political corruption at the grassroots level. Specifically, 'the ability to have policies applied or not applied to certain groups or individuals' often became a crucial 'source of income and power' to those local elites, both political and bureaucratic, who acted as gatekeepers for the state and who thereby controlled 'access' to the publicly provided goods and services that monopoly control over service delivery and programme and project implementation afforded.¹⁰ Although it was not implausible to see some positive aspects in this institutionalisation of bias in policy implementation—eg 'black-market bureaucracy' as one way of rationing scarce resources—even the most generous of interpretations, like James Scott's view of implementational corruption as the functional equivalent of Western interest group activity, could not avoid the fact that the possession of either political or economic power, or both, was a necessary and sufficient condition for gaining advantage from specific government policies.¹¹ In short, the political poor (ie the unorganised, and those physically distant from the centres of political power, notably the rural subsistence farmer) as well as the economic poor were left as policy-takers without any significant opportunities and prospects for achieving influence through conventional mechanisms such as party or pressure group politics.

Interestingly, what most contemporary observers noted about this 1970s policy-making status quo was the tendency for elite failures and other shortcomings, including rapid regime turnover and coup cycles as well as rampant corruption, to be greeted by what appeared at the time to be a situation of mass political apathy and indifference. 'Since governments are not expected by citizens to implement policies effectively and efficiently, there are few political consequences governments face if policies do not meet desired goals'.¹² What we have now more clearly come to understand is the extent to which the great mass of the population of the states of the South had come not just to resent but also covertly and then more overtly to reject their double burden. Not only were they excluded from the political process, but also, as producers, they provided the resource-base of regimes that exploited them without scruple. If 'voice', the politics of influence, was by and large precluded, 'exit', the rejection of the state and avoidance of its obligations, was not. What came to be termed by Africanists 'disengagement' from the state became an increasingly common occurrence as policy-takers, the rural poor in particular, responded to bias and corruption by opting out, economically and politically, and increasingly evading the state structures and taxation demands that underpinned inequitable patronage structures.¹³

With the advantages of hindsight, we can now more clearly perceive the

extent to which political apathy, rather than signifying passive resignation and acceptance, reflected a pervasive and deeply rooted mass distrust of and antipathy towards the politically and administratively powerful, and politics itself. Certainly, despite the sea changes that have taken place in the states of the South during the 1980s and 1990s, this legacy of public bitterness towards policy makers and administrators alike, remains a characteristic feature of contemporary life in the Third World. As Hyden and Reutlinger emphasise, the concept of the 'public' remains substantially meaningless in a very large number of DCs 'as a result of abuse of state power and misappropriation of government funds. People do not trust public servants. They expect they will only help themselves.'¹⁴

Democratisation and the uncertain evolution of implementational practices

What is, therefore, now becoming abundantly clear is that the 'transition' to democracy and its attendant transition from a politics based on clientelism to a politics based on the concept of citizenship is neither swift nor certain, and that any real 'consolidation' of democracy in the South will only occur over decades. We are now just beginning to appreciate that '[i]f there is more to democracy than elections, then there is more to democratization than the transition to elections'. The appropriate analytical response is increasingly to refocus our attention away from the 'high' politics of periodic national elections towards the 'deep' politics experienced by ordinary people on a day-to-day basis, 'studying how most people are actually represented and governed—before, during, and after the historic turning points of high politics'.¹⁵ And that agenda, of course, demands that we relearn the lessons of the 1970s policy-making literature, once again seeking a clearer understanding not simply of how policies are implemented under current structural adjustment regimes, but also of evolving mass perceptions of the appropriateness, honesty and overall value of these inherently political processes to the lives of ordinary people. This involves focusing less on the processes and structures of policy formulation that, inevitably, remain remote from the experiences of the mass of the population, and concentrating more on how centrally defined and formulated policies and programmes are applied and administered as local projects or are delivered as services. For it is mass reactions to these projects and services that will indicate the extent to which national democratic transitions have begun to attain some local content and served to encourage, or to inhibit, a more positive mass engagement with, and mass perceptions of, the state, its policies, its functionaries and its representatives.

Ironically, despite the fact that the unravelling over the past decade and a half of significant dimensions—though not the totality—of the characteristic 'Third World' policy process of the 1970s has been endlessly documented, the great bulk of this work has concentrated on questions of policy formulation rather than on implementation. Yet, arguably, particularly from a grassroots perspective, policy formulation has changed less in its structure and style than policy implementation. For, as NGOs and GROS endlessly and correctly point out, the former remains dominated by the state and donor elites that controlled, and

policed entry into, the policy formulation process during the 1970s, with the current position changed only in respect of the increased influence, relative to the state, gained and retained by donors during the recent era of crippling debt burdens and catastrophic economic decline. By way of contrast, policy implementation processes have changed much more clearly in both structure and operational style as resource-poor, financially distressed and increasingly donor-dependent states have been forced to surrender the almost monopolistic control over policy, programme and project delivery and administration that they were able to exercise during the 1970s, when, as Thomas Smith confirms, '[i]n most instances' the implementing organisation was 'a unit of the government bureaucracy'.¹⁶

Since a central feature of these donor-imposed changes to the structure and functioning of policy and programme implementation increasingly involved NGOs in project work and service delivery, either as an alternative to or operating alongside existing state institutions, the details salient to this paper can be quickly summarised. Crucially, under donor pressures for political as well as economic conditionality and reinforced by emergent global norms of 'governance' and 'good government', implementation has slowly but steadily become a more honest and predictable (but not necessarily a correspondingly more cost-effective, and efficient, let alone a more transparent and participatory) process in an increasingly large number of Third World states. Conversely, albeit with many exceptions implementation has gradually become less subject to the inequities, irrationalities and constant vicissitudes of the patron-client politics and blackmarket bureaucracies that characterised Third World policy processes in the 1980s. Due caution is, of course, required at this point, even if it is true that the 'assumption ... that organizational behaviour in the Third World is inevitably conditioned by patron-client relationships' is much less regularly and commonly found in the relevant academic literature today than it was ten years ago.¹⁷ However correct this assertion may be, the point is not self-explanatory. Indeed, the fact that 'the literature on political clientelism virtually stopped over a decade ago...' probably says more about changing academic fashions and research funding trends than it does about the realities of, and evolutionary changes in, Third World political processes.¹⁸ Despite the widespread success of many of the initial 'transitions' toward electorally competitive democracy, it is clearly naively optimistic to view the relationship between electoral competition and patron-client politics in zero-sum terms and, therefore, premature to flag the disappearance of patron-client politics from the states of the South.

In practice, historical experience, and recent evidence, suggests that democratisation in the form of inter-party competition can as easily encourage patron-client politics as inhibit it. For example, recent Latin American experience with poverty alleviation programs has underlined the point that '[p]olitics is a much greater factor in the implementation of programs for the poor under democratic government ...' than it was under military dictatorships, and that politics can have highly variable effects.¹⁹ While continuity in technocratic regularity was accompanied by greater attention to beneficiary views following democratisation in Chile, in Peru democratisation was accompanied by the cynical utilisation of pro-poor programmes by the ruling party 'as a tool for

clientelism and cooptation', resulting in widespread 'misallocation of funds...as well as alienation (persons)...' among organisations excluded from participation and benefits.²⁰ Unsurprisingly recent research has underlined the point that many clientelisms not only possess deep sociopolitical roots, but also possess an apparently in-built capacity to alter their shapes and forms in response to changing political conditions and varying socioeconomic contexts. This suggests that a more measured conclusion would indicate that patron-client politics has gone into temporary abeyance across much of the South, merely awaiting the return of more propitious politico-economic circumstances to emerge once again. The fact that the reach, impact and overall political salience of many clientelist systems have been greatly constrained by the reductions of government-controlled resources that have been such a widespread feature of the 1980s economic crisis, should more properly be viewed as a tentative, perhaps temporary, feature of contemporary Third World political economies, rather than as evidence of any more profound changes.

These caveats notwithstanding, policy implementation across much of the Third World now appears to have become both less, and less widely, corrupt than it was in the 1970s. For example, Ward and Chant, surveying the literature on community leadership up to the mid-1980s, highlight what 'appears to be a tendency for an increasingly technocratic commitment to underpin bureaucracy behaviour. In Latin America, at least, some governments are finding that they can achieve social control equally effectively by becoming more efficient and technocratic in matters of urban management...' 'If, they continue, 'this is a broadening trend, then it will substantially change the format of state-community relations in the future. These are likely to become more 'routinized' and less open to particularistic patterns of decision taking.'²¹ Today, almost a decade away from these research findings, the issue of broadening seems rather less problematic than those related to the deepening and consolidation of now widely evident trends away from politico-administrative particularism, albeit not always towards technocracy. As argued above, the current issue is one of sustainability, which is far from a certainty in most cases, and not even a possibility in some.

NGOs, implementational probity and public trust

Although the scattered and disparate nature of the available information makes the attribution of a direct causal relationship premature, there are clear indications that NGO roles in, and impacts on, these positive developments have been quantitatively and qualitatively significant, with the sector as a whole contributing in some major ways to the inauguration and reinforcement of trends towards enhanced implementational honesty and predictability, as well as towards greater distributional equity and even-handedness in service delivery. Despite the fact that even small-scale attitudinal survey work is comparatively rarely undertaken in the Third World, there is little doubt that, with comparatively few exceptions, levels of public trust in NGOs have been, and generally remain, higher than those accorded to GOS, despite the explosive expansion of NGO activity (and funding) across most of the South. This was confirmed by the results of an attitudinal survey undertaken recently in Zambia which indicated that 'public trust was

somewhat higher for non-governmental organisations...than for governmental institutions...' Although the small scale of the sample (116 Zambians drawn from three localities) does not allow any definitive conclusion to be drawn, it is, at the very least, interesting that this 'small sample of citizens gave low scores to most "street-level" governmental bureaucracies', with the lowest trust ratings accorded to the police and local councils. Significantly, it was local government councils in some rural centres that elicited the greatest degree of distrust. This 'was traced by respondents, not only to corruption, but also to alleged ignorance among councillors about their proper duties...People became particularly suspicious when local officials do not follow transparent procedures in handling public funds'. Overall, as Michael Bratton and Beatrice Liatto-Katundu rightly point out on the basis of their Zambian interviews, levels of trust in government, particularly local government, institutions are so low in most of the Third World that it is now well nigh impossible for GOS to break out of the vicious circle of corruption and citizen distrust autonomously. 'Commonly, distrust in leaders has been fuelled by official corruption, which in turn poses obstacles to the rehabilitation of rundown institutions like local government and the police.'²²

If rehabilitation of the policy implementation process is to occur under contemporary conditions, it will almost certainly require the direct assistance and support of the non-governmental sector to achieve what the governmental sector can no longer be expected to aspire to unaided. Thomas Carroll's description of 30 highly rated Latin American NGOs as best collectively characterised by 'their outstanding ability to implement projects...' is more widely applicable across the South, as is its corollary that this 'is an ability rarely found among the national service providers'.²³ To date, the interventions and activities of a number of NGOs have already been identified as of importance in providing appropriate, replicable, implementational models, some of which have also been recorded as playing a part in assisting GOS in the South to begin to break out of the cycle of official corruption and public distrust. Initially, Northern NGOs provided many of these role models of implementational probity (used in this paper in its dictionary sense as denoting honesty and uprightness) and distributional even-handedness, generally running their own projects as well as their expanding service-delivery duties, honestly and fairly, largely ensuring that, even if targeted beneficiaries were not always reached, funding was not diverted for corrupt purposes. More recently, the appropriate role models have increasingly been provided by SNGOs themselves. For example, Andy Batkin's case study of one of Bangladesh's largest international NGOs, the Lutheran World Service-sponsored Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Service (RDRS) with almost 1700 staff in 1992, highlighted the point that 'RDRS is often seen as a model for government. Local politicians and government officers frequently point to RDRS as capable of performing activities effectively and efficiently'. Unsurprisingly, RDRS' financial control systems are both well-institutionalised and efficiently operated. 'Both RDRS management and its external auditors consider that RDRS is almost entirely corruption-free: in the past five years less than a dozen cases of wilful misappropriation have been detected'. Small wonder, therefore, that 'the value system built up in RDRS over 21 years, centred on field orientation,

personal integrity and commitment to the poor', is seen as central to its achievement of organisational efficiency and developmental effectiveness.²⁴

There is considerable evidence to suggest that indigenous NGOs tend in general to replicate many of these positive organisational characteristics and behavioural patterns. For example, Julie Fisher's recent wide-ranging survey of the sector and its literature underlined the comparative rarity of records of corruption among Southern NGOs, specifically reminding us that the large, 19 country Club of Rome study had found that, whereas due attention to the needs of the poor was the sectoral norm, corruption was 'extremely rare'.²⁵ Moreover, this finding has been confirmed by other, smaller-scale but more intensive studies, generally indicating that the overall level of corruption in Southern NGOs remains extremely low, particularly in relation to the large numbers of organisations, projects undertaken, and beneficiaries served across the South. The central point, however, is qualitative rather than quantitative: arguably, the most significant of the NGO sector's 'qualitative advantages' over state functionaries is their reputation for being 'better able to enforce higher professional standards than some government officers...'²⁶ Although probity is clearly crucial to the definition of these high professional standards, its presence tends to be acknowledged indirectly rather than explicitly, as in Thomas Carroll's depiction of 'the pervading sense of mission' that characterised the Latin American 'intermediary NGOs' he studied.²⁷ While clearly indicating the operation of what Julie Fisher terms 'a strong code of ethics' in the NGO sector, such formulations stop short of according honesty (ie the comparative rarity of individual and organisational corruption and graft) the centrality that, paradoxically, its absence has so regularly been accorded in depictions of the unprofessional standards regularly exhibited by Third World state functionaries and policy makers.²⁸ Ironically, therefore, given both this glaring contrast to state behaviour and the negative impact that pervasive political and administrative corruption has had on Third World publics, NGO probity (*qua* honesty) has never been accorded the key role it appears to merit in formulations depicting central sectoral virtues.²⁹

NGOS, GOS and problems of organisational honesty and transparency

This apparent sectoral lack of awareness of the importance of organisational honesty to its Third World publics has left us with impressions, rather than the hard information that is required fully to evaluate the role of probity in the success of the NGO sector. Anecdotal information abounds, of course, as in this example given by Julie Fisher. 'BRAC (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee) interviewed the landless in ten Bangladesh villages, and recorded land grabs and unfair loans and bribes as a way of mapping corruption. Single events were not news to the poor, but as the numbers added up, they became interested, and BRAC used this interest as an organizing vehicle for landless groups.'³⁰ Yet we still lack the detailed studies required to evaluate the cumulative impact of honest and (fairly) cost effective resource use on public perceptions of the sector across the Third World. In particular, we have relatively little hard and detailed information from the grassroots concerning the 'difference' NGOs have made to the management of activities and the delivery of services previously exclusively

controlled and delivered by governments, and, currently, variously incorporating NGOs as substitutes for, supplementers of, and in partnership with GOS. As yet GO failures generally remain better documented, and more clearly substantiated, than NGO successes, but most studies, even when covering the same administrative activities or functions, deal with the two types of organisation quite separately, often highlighting different countries and different time-periods, and, therefore, giving a rather disjointed picture.

For example, there is now an extensive literature on support services and promotion agencies for small enterprises (SES) in DCS. Until the mid-1980s attention was 'focused, in particular, upon the ineffectiveness and, in some cases, failure of the Government Organisations (GOS)...'. More recently, in the 1990s, 'success stories about increasing participation of Non Government Organisations (NGOs) in promotion of SES' have been prominent, leading to 'calls...to favour and support NGOs over GOS as an effective intermediary for SE development in the Third World'. In practice, as Sarder's recent study of the Bangladesh case underlines, direct comparison of the activities and impacts of the GOS and NGOs operating in the SE sector, is more likely to lead to rather less clear-cut conclusions.¹¹ Overall, the nine organisations (five GOS and four NGOs) were viewed as 'rather ineffective' by the Bangladeshi entrepreneurs surveyed, although the NGOs were perceived to be 'more effective than public sector agencies'. This was despite the fact that 'the GOS offer services in greater quantity and at less cost to their clients (mostly free of charges) than the NGOs', underlining the point that qualitative factors such as credibility and trustworthiness are highly significant to positive public perceptions of the 'worth' of NGOs, and indicating that these factors may offset the size, cost and other quantitative advantages that GOS may still possess.

In short, available comparisons of GOS and NGOs clearly indicate that the latter's probity is a sectorally important distinguishing feature. However, such comparisons are both insufficiently precise and insufficiently numerous to substantiate this contention fully. Substantiation is both important and overdue, since the sheer volume of development funding now channelled through NGOs inevitably raises questions about sectoral financial standards. This is unfortunate since, in the absence of contradictory evidence, funding increases make NGOs easy targets. In particular, the continuing proliferation of NGOs leads to charges of sectoral opportunism on the one hand, and of a new form of donor-imposed international clientage on the other. Arellano-Lopez and Petras' trenchant critique of the role of NGOs in Bolivia's Fondo Social de Emergencia (FSE), originally widely viewed as a model anti-poverty programme, provides a recent, and pertinent, illustration of the potential credibility problems facing the sector. 'As international funding grew and state institutions contracted, large numbers of NGOs were created in response to little more than the opportunity to pursue the available resources. Older NGOs...felt obliged to join in the chase for funds...or be lost in the ocean of new NGO acronyms. The diversity of views that these organizations represented has largely been lost as they have competed with one another to become the favoured clients of international donors'. Moreover, these charges of organisational opportunism and institutional subordination of principle for financial advantage can equally easily be aimed at individual em-

ployees. Once again Arellano-Lopez and Petras neatly illustrate the nature of the problem, correctly pointing out that an earlier, positive, evaluation of the Bolivian Emergency Social Fund did 'not mention the contribution of the FSE to paying the salaries of NGO officials. It would be instructive to know what the sources and amounts of their income would have been in the absence of the FSE...'.³²

Crucially, whereas probity has been an identifiable feature of the NGO sector, transparency has not. Inevitably, competition between NGOs for funding and contracts has encouraged them to become increasingly sensitive about the importance of their image, 'treating information as a public relations activity (ie releasing the good and hiding the bad) and this compromises transparency'.³³ Ironically, of course, the cycle becomes steadily more vicious since the absence of organisational and sectoral transparency simply breeds further suspicion, as in Yash Tandon's claim that 'foreign NGOs are a secret lot. We do not really know much about them...Much of the criticism we have of foreign NGOs in Africa stems from the fact that they work with such secrecy and opaqueness that it is right for an African to be suspicious about them *ab initio*'. Although the case may be overstated, Tandon's plea for greater transparency from international NGOs, and, by the same token, for greater reciprocity towards and equality of treatment of indigenous NGOs, is entirely appropriate. 'Periodically, the western NGOs demand that their "partners" open up their books and hearts to explaining what they have been doing with "their" money. This is called "evaluation"...African NGOs have no such privileged access to the hearts and minds (and accounts) of the western NGOs from which they receive money'.³⁴

The wider problems posed by this lack of transparency, and the resultant dearth of information on important issues relating to NGO management, operations and performance, are potentially serious, as Edwards and Hulme have recently underlined in their delineation of an accountability 'vacuum' in relation to NGOs and GROs. As they point out 'very little is known about' how sectoral accountabilities in general are evolving and being managed in a rapidly changing developmental environment, specifically seeking 'evidence of the functioning/non-functioning of accountability processes. Are there examples in which "unsatisfactory" NGO/GRO probity or performance has led to members, trustees, governments, donors, contributors taking action and applying sanctions?'³⁵ Inevitably, such negative examples can be found, for example if records of NGO liquidations, or even the sudden scaling-down of project work, are carefully pursued, since, among such a large and still rapidly expanding set of organisations there are bound to be a certain number that 'simply fall prey to internal corruption and managerial incompetence'.³⁶ However, the fact that this question has to be asked at all provides *prima facie* evidence that corruption is still relatively uncommon among NGOs and GROs. It can reasonably be hypothesised that increased transparency in relation to NGO probity would be doubly advantageous; at once polishing external images and providing evidence of, at least, a relatively clean bill of health in relation to the effectiveness of the short-term, or 'functional', accountability associated with honest financial practices and efficient, cost-effective resource utilisation.³⁷

It is also important to emphasise that improved sectoral transparency is not

simply an option that NGOs may or may not choose to observe. On the contrary, prompt and effective attention to the issue of transparency is mandatory if NGOs are to retain their existing competitive edge, in terms of positive public perceptions, over GOS. The recent Zambian survey, for example, found that trust in various indigenous NGOs was only 'somewhat' higher on average than trust in GOS. It also, crucially, underlined the significance of transparency, or rather, of its absence, to the Zambian public's highly negative perceptions of its local GOS.³⁸ At least in the medium term, NGOs cannot expect to continue to be automatically credited with virtues simply because GOS have vices. To date, as Michael Bratton has pointed out in relation to the African situation, the NGO sector's generally 'positive reputation has arisen by default—as a response to the shortcomings of state interventions—rather than from a systematic review of concrete accomplishments'.³⁹ In the short term, Third World publics are likely to continue to give NGOs the benefit of the doubt but, in the absence of improved sectoral transparency, this situation will not continue for much longer. Indeed, particularly in relation to Africa, revisionist views are already common, if not yet predominant. Robert Fatton provides a representative example, emphasising the 'indications...that NGOs are not necessarily innovative and efficient developmental institutions working with the "poorest of the poor", nor are they free from corruption, elitism, and internecine rivalries'.⁴⁰ Since not all Third World GOS, nor even all local government institutions, are inherently inefficient or incurably corrupt, NGOs will increasingly have to both earn and publicly confirm their superior merits on these dimensions, if they wish to continue to justify and reinforce their current reputations for greater efficiency and exemplary honesty.

If, from a transparency perspective, it is simply annoying that details of the 'birth rates' of NGOs are 'scarce', it is wholly unacceptable that comparable details regarding 'their "death rates" are unavailable'.⁴¹ For, in the absence of more detailed information concerning sectoral trends and their causes, it will simply be assumed that NGOs, like GOS have much to hide from their publics. Recent events in South Africa provide development NGOs in general with a salutary example of how the absence of probity in a few organisations can, with great rapidity and apparent finality, be magnified into a major sectoral disaster *in the absence of an effective culture of transparency*. The recent accusation that the veteran anti-apartheid campaigner, Dr Allan Boesak, misused large quantities of donor funds intended for the support of the developmental work undertaken by his Foundation for Peace and Justice, is far from insignificant in itself. Yet the ramifications for South Africa's previously buoyant NGO sector are likely to be much more serious and widespread than the possible discrediting of an individual, however important, might initially suggest. This negative implication for the NGO sector as a whole is simply a result of the unavoidable problems engendered by the automatic assumptions of guilt by association; assumptions that are themselves the direct product of an originally unavoidable transparency deficit. 'A huge raft of non-governmental organisations, most of which do great and honest work, will no doubt come under new scrutiny after the Boesak affair ...', a writer in *The Independent* suggested on the basis of the evidence of initial reactions in South Africa. 'Many a secret may lurk in the murky depths of a

phenomenon known as "struggle accounting", by which organisations hid the true use of funds for fear of the apartheid-era government'.⁴²

Conclusions: probity, transparency and projects

Currently, it is becoming fashionable to depict the demands of what are now commonly defined as NGOs' 'economic' roles—whether as managers of income-generating projects or as contractors delivering community welfare services—as if they were a structurally-defined, donor and government-imposed straitjacket largely designed to frustrate legitimate NGO aspirations to 'scale up' their political activities and impacts. In particular, involvement in the detail of development projects tends to be viewed by some NGOs as a block to their prospects for the achievement of wider and more meaningful involvement in 'policy-making' processes and programme definition, as well as diverting NGOs away from their highly valued roles as policy advocates, educators and lobbyists. This paper has sought to view these 'economic' roles as project implementers—still covering the great bulk of NGO work—as involving inherent, if also, at least from the point of view of each project and each NGO, inherently modest, political opportunities and prospects. However, this attempt to be more positive and to find some synergy between the economic and the political dimensions of NGO work should not be interpreted as advocating an 'all is currently well in the best of all possible worlds' view. On the contrary, there are some obvious and significant senses in which, even within the relatively narrow confines of the project implementation process, there will always be some tensions and even some potential incompatibilities between the political and the economic aspects of these activities.

Specifically, the NGO reputations for honesty and financial rectitude that have been accorded prominence in this paper are ultimately dependent on the continuing confirmations of probity provided by the strictness, thoroughness and transparency of the reporting and accounting criteria mandated and enforced either internally, by managements, or externally, by donors. Yet, at the same time, the application and enforcement of these criteria are clearly far from costless in organisational terms and may in practice serve to divert some NGOs from the substantive requirements of their developmental projects, particularly since 'donor funding cycles are not always in synchronization with project implementation schedules'.⁴³ Moreover, the underlying problem may, in practice, be a deep-seated one, constantly pitting probity requirements against wider 'performance' criteria relating 'to the impact and effectiveness of development work'.⁴⁴ For example, Alan Fowler rightly emphasises the degree to which NGO organisational forms, particularly up until the late 1980s, were primarily a function of their funding history, rather than adapted to the requirements of their specific developmental roles and tasks. 'This often leads to NGO organisational forms which are more suited to the business of raising and accounting for money than to micro-development, ie, a mismatch which is inherent to the nature of NGO funding'.⁴⁵

Moreover, Fowler is right to suggest that this situation could lead to serious problems in retaining the two distinguishing features which collectively provide

NGOs with their potential 'comparative advantage' over governments in micro-development. From this comparative advantage perspective, an organisational structure driven principally by financial and other internally-focused managerial criteria may well both undermine possibilities for some creative interactions with beneficiaries and weaken an NGO's capacity to deliver the micro-developmental goods. Specific problems, moreover, occur when small indigenous NGOs, previously characterised by rather informal managerial monitoring and accountability practices based largely on trust, expand rapidly and are forced by external funders to professionalise and formally introduce systematic monitoring, accounting and auditing procedures. 'The funding agencies are bureaucratic organizations and they expect the NGOs to adhere to bureaucratic procedures.'⁴⁶ As evidence of the particular problems that this enforced transition can engender, Edwards and Hulme cite the example of Sarvodaya in Sri Lanka, where rapid growth led to the collapse of internal financial management 'and confusion on the part of donors as to whether functional accounting was simply weak or whether it was hiding improprieties'.⁴⁷ Furthermore, even for large, experienced and managerially sophisticated NGOs, complex donor-driven accounting and financial control requirements—particularly when a single project may involve several donors, all with widely differing timetables and technical requirements—are inevitably both labour and time intensive and, therefore, costly. How costly, of course, is difficult to judge since, paradoxically, as noted above, financial transparency over project costs has been most notable by its absence, making comparisons and evaluations, both organisational and sectoral, impossible. What limited information there is would seem to indicate that such requirements may often be very costly. In turn, this provides some indirect indications that the defensiveness demonstrated by the widespread tendency to 'hide' the evidence needed to evaluate project costs openly against project benefits, is based on some real worries among most NGOs as to how well they are actually performing in the field.

For instance, even the largely positive evaluations of the impact of Bolivia's large and extremely ambitious 'model' programme for alleviating the problems of poverty stemming from structural adjustment, the FSE, can be read as indicating that its actual successes in meeting the needs of its intended beneficiaries, the poor, are 'very modest', at least in comparison to the 'important benefits' accruing to NGOs.⁴⁸ Not the least of these benefits, of course, were vastly expanded funding opportunities, resulting in considerable sectoral expansion and increased NGO professionalisation in a country 'where nongovernmental organisations' activity was relatively new and their cooperation with state programs was largely underdeveloped'.⁴⁹ In support of their critique Arellano-Lopez and Petras cite a Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)-funded and state-conducted study which, rather unsurprisingly, revealed that Bolivian NGOs were enmeshed in the same kinds of difficulties that Bolivia's state agencies had always experienced in 'co-ordinating their activities and reaching their beneficiaries', and, most particularly, in doing so in the cost effective ways that claims to NGO comparative advantage in these respects might indicate. 'The study estimated that for every \$100 spent on social development projects conducted by NGOs, only about \$15–20 reached the designed beneficiaries. Most

of the rest was used to pay administrative costs and professional salaries.' Overall, the conclusions drawn by Allerano-Lopez and Petras appear reasonable. Even taking into account the point that the state agency undertaking the study, the Ministry of Peasant Affairs and Agriculture, 'clearly had a vested interest in the results, it is apparent that commonly held assumptions about the benefits of promoting development through NGOs should not be accepted without critical scrutiny'.⁵⁰ In many ways, of course, this is simply further confirmation of Judith Tendler's contention that NGO 'articles of faith' in general, and their claims to greater cost effectiveness than indigenous GOS or Northern aid agencies in particular, are, if not exactly mythical, likely to be only imperfectly translated in practice into Alan Fowler's NGO 'comparative advantage in relief and micro-development'.⁵¹

What pertains at the sectoral level, among NGOs in general, replicates what tends to happen at the level of the individual NGO, and ultimately, what tends to occur at the level of the individual project. Strict, complex and time-consuming donor-driven financial reporting and monitoring criteria simply provide further (good) reasons why many, perhaps most, individual micro-developmental projects are likely to be less than totally successful *qua* projects. That, of course, is how things have always been and, it may be suggested, how they always will be, particularly until donors, governments and NGOs can transcend the 'magic bullet syndrome', as *their central definition of what it is that constitutes project success*. This syndrome involves an incessant search for 'simple, neat solutions to development problems' which, in turn, can be both widely publicised and widely replicated. Indeed, the major conclusion to be drawn from this paper can conveniently be formulated as an addendum to Jessica Vivian's eminently sensible suggestion that '[i]f NGOs were expected to experiment—and at times to fail—rather than to solve problems with simple "magic bullets", they would be much more effective, and could contribute much further to an understanding of development problems and their solutions'. In this way, the claims to firmer donor support for NGO project experiments that Vivian advances can be provided with an additional justification, as long as these 'experiments', including the 'failures', are truly 'honest' ones, and, therefore, serve further to confirm mass perceptions of the growing probity of policy implementation processes. From this perspective it should not seem quite so curious that the Zimbabwean NGO 'invited by an external donor to submit a funding proposal...to "strengthen civil society" was asked to propose a project to do so...'.⁵² For, in reconsidering our attitudes toward projects, it is worth recalling Foucault's aphorism that people know both what they are doing, and why they are doing it, but that they do not know what they do does.

Notes

This paper develops themes originally presented at the African Studies Association of the UK Biennial Conference, University of Lancaster, September 1994. The authors are grateful for the helpful suggestions and constructive comments offered at the Panel on NGOs. These have greatly assisted them in further

developing their arguments for this expanded and substantially revised version. Specific thanks are also due to Tony Cleobury, Coventry University, for research assistance.

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1995 - Volume 4 (3 issues). ISSN 0958-4935.

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Linking national and global population agendas: case studies from eight developing countries

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During the past 40 years there have been numerous initiatives on population at the global level and, in particular, the promotion of measures to moderate population growth through family planning (FP). Many high-level conferences and meetings have been held, generally followed by large amounts of financial assistance to encourage governments of developing countries to adopt policies and programmes to reduce fertility rates.¹ Most recently held has been the International Conference on Population and Development in September 1994, a high-profile meeting in Cairo which sought to define and broaden the population agenda for the coming decade amid extensive media attention. The Cairo conference has been one of several held or planned by the United Nations since the mid-1980s to address broad themes.²

The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, funded by the UN Population Fund, has coordinated a study of FP policies and programmes in four pairs of developing countries—Zambia/Zimbabwe, Algeria/Tunisia, Pakistan/Bangladesh, and the Philippines/Thailand.³ Each pair of countries was chosen for their rough cultural and economic similarity, but dissimilarity in terms of population policy and implementation. The purpose of choosing similar countries was to achieve a clearer understanding of why and how some developing countries create appropriate and effective population policies while other, rather similar countries, do not. The study itself consisted of two parts: a policy analysis of the historical determinants of FP policies in terms of policy actors, processes and contexts; and a demographic analysis of the consequences of FP policies in terms of fertility rates and other indicators. Drawing on the policy analysis from the study, one of the key questions addressed was whether a link could be made between policy making at the global and national levels. After all the hype and fanfare of international conferences, followed by well-intended declarations and financial pledges, to what extent do these global-level efforts actually influence national policy makers? And, if they do, under what circumstances? In short, to what extent has the global population agenda led to greater commitment to FP at the national level by governments?

Overall it was found that, in the four pairs of case study countries, national FP policies and programmes have been shaped to a varying degree by global developments. The extent of this influence has depended on the compatibility between national and global policy contexts. First, it is held that the degree of support by a government for FP has corresponded with that country's relations with Western countries over time. The closer a country's political and economic

relations with Western countries, the more receptive national policy elites have been to the global population agenda.⁴ Second, it is held that support for FP has been influenced by changing economic circumstances in each country, as well as particular development strategies pursued. When economic problems (including land pressure and scarcity of natural resources) have been perceived as urgent by policy elites, FP has tended to be higher on national policy agendas. This has been especially so where a government has adopted a development strategy based on rapid economic growth,⁵ which recognises a direct link between limiting population growth and increased economic development.⁶

Putting family planning on the policy agenda: the 1950s to 1974

Analysing the changing political and economic characteristics of the case study countries, and the global population agenda from the 1950s, we see that their political economies have strongly shaped the context within which FP policies and programmes have been either supported or opposed. During the 1950s only Pakistan (then including Bangladesh) and Rhodesia (then including Zimbabwe and Zambia) had nascent FP activities. For the other countries, FP was either not yet seen as an area of legitimate concern by government (Philippines, Tunisia) or there were strong pronatalist attitudes (Thailand, Algeria).

Following independence in 1947, Pakistan remained closely allied with Western countries. During 1954-55 it joined the US-sponsored military alliances of the Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO) and the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO),⁷ and from the late 1950s onwards, under Sandhurst-educated President Ayub Khan, 'established itself as a test case in capitalist development strategy aligned to the Western power bloc and heavily dependent on US economic and military aid'.⁸ It was as part of Ayub Khan's embrace of prevailing Western ideas about development that the government saw the limitation of population growth as important to the country's modernisation. As he declared in 1959, 'the menace of overpopulation and rapid rate of population increase exists in most underdeveloped countries, and a big concentrated drive is necessary to educate the people about the evils of overpopulation'.⁹ Initially this led to limited FP services provided by voluntary organisations in urban areas. By 1960 Pakistan became one of the first countries to adopt an official policy to slow population growth, and to negotiate assistance from the Population Council.

In Rhodesia the first FP services were introduced by and largely for the white populations of Harare and Bulawayo in the mid-1950s. These limited services were provided by two voluntary organisations,¹⁰ with the financial and technical support of the US-based Pathfinder Fund. The primary motivation for introducing FP at this time was health rather than the reduction of fertility. The response to these early efforts was mixed: most whites were indifferent and in some cases morally opposed to FP, while blacks were sensitive to the racial overtones of 'birth control'.¹¹

By the 1960s there was a notable increase in attention at the global level towards FP. This shift was led by Western countries, notably Scandinavian and later the USA, which 'pushed harder than any other Western government for

developing countries to adopt population policies'.¹² The US Agency for International Development (USAID) became the largest single donor for population programmes, totalling US\$3.9 billion between 1968–88.¹³ From the late 1960s it was joined by multilateral aid from the World Bank, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) (created in 1969) and to a lesser extent the World Health Organization (WHO).¹⁴ These efforts were greatly assisted by the increased availability of the intrauterine device (IUD), sterilisation and oral contraceptives in the 1960s which made possible active and widespread intervention in fertility behaviour. These methods proved popular among users in industrialised countries, and donors were keen to fund their distribution in developing countries. Finally, the results of macroeconomic studies and simulations provided evidence for supporters of FP that rapid population growth was a problem for many developing countries.¹⁵

Among the case study countries, how this international enthusiasm for FP was received depended on their respective political and economic relations with Western countries. Because of a close identification of the global population agenda with Western governments, FP tended to come onto the policy agenda earlier in those countries which had closer relations with the West. Alternatively, in those countries which maintained more distant and even hostile relations with the West, FP was seen to be in the interests of Western governments rather than the developing world.

This is well-illustrated by comparing the policy contexts of Tunisia and Algeria during this period. Like Pakistan's Ayub Khan, and despite the adoption of socialist policies, President Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia was a strong advocate of modernisation based on open relations with Western and developing countries. Tunisia gained independence peacefully in 1956 and subsequent relations with Western countries, particularly France, were less tainted than for Algeria. At the same time, as a member of the Nonaligned Movement (NAM) and Group of 77, the government was an active participant in the development of North South debates. It was in this context of openness towards the West that FP was accepted as part of a broader agenda for economic development. As President Bourguiba stated in 1962, 'What good will it do if we expand our mining industries and increase our national income, if we cannot control population growth?'¹⁶ Internationally, Tunisia became one of the early sponsors of a Sweden-led resolution put forth at the UN General Assembly in 1962 on 'Population growth and Economic Development'.¹⁷

In contrast, commitment to FP in Algeria was much weaker. Following its war of independence with France (1954–62), Algeria aligned itself strategically with the Soviet Union. Rejecting Western ideas about development as neo-imperialist, the government followed the Soviet model of development and became an active member of OPEC in 1969, the NAM and Group of 77.¹⁸ It was as part of this anti-imperialist stance that the need to limit population growth was rejected as a Western-imposed issue aimed at weakening rather than assisting developing countries. This wariness towards Western domination was reflected in a motion adopted by the National Union of Algerian Women (UNFA) in 1966 which stated that FP be provided with:

strict medical control and training of qualified personnel...in order not to fall into the problem met by several countries where foreigners have themselves implemented the family planning structures, in place of nationals, neglecting both medical control and human contact.¹⁹

It was in this unreceptive environment that FP was initially introduced in Algeria in 1966—in support of maternal and child health (MCH)—but later dropped from public policy as President Boumedienne became increasingly vocal against ‘false solutions like birth control’ for the problems of development.

A similar distrust of foreign influence existed in Zambia after the country gained its independence through elections held in 1964. The new government under President Kenneth Kaunda adopted a political doctrine of ‘humanism’ in 1967 which aimed ‘to build on traditional African values and...the creation of a society based on mutual assistance and equal opportunity’.²⁰ This form of African socialism, amid struggles for independence throughout southern Africa, was aligned neither with the West nor the Soviet bloc. Instead Zambia became a staunch member of the NAM and its political leaders denounced colonial rule and international capitalism, and nationalised key industries such as mining and manufacturing. In this context, Western-led support for FP was likely to be seen as part of a colonial past which newly-independent countries needed to reject. Indeed rapid population growth was not seen as an immediate problem by policy elites during this period of relative economic prosperity. With vast copper reserves and high commodity prices, it was believed that the mining industry would serve as the engine of Zambia’s economic development. Between 1964–72 copper provided over 92% of export earnings and an average of 52% of government revenues.²¹ Furthermore, with only four persons per square kilometre in 1960,²² there was a perception of plentiful land and resources among policy elites. Thus the government was less concerned about population growth than other population issues such as rapid and large-scale urbanisation.²³

While Algeria and Zambia remained unreceptive to growing global concerns about population growth, policy makers in Pakistan, Thailand and the Philippines proved more responsive during the 1960s. Building on the initial efforts of the 1950s, the government of Pakistan launched a large-scale National Family Planning Scheme in 1965. The programme received extensive support from external donors who poured money, contraceptives and personnel into the country (US\$6.8 million annually between 1966–68). More generally, this was also a high point in relations between Pakistan and Western countries, which provided US\$480 million of economic aid to the country between 1966–68.²⁴ Abroad Pakistan played a prominent role at the UN in the early 1960s in its support of Sweden’s efforts to put population on the agenda. The head of the Swedish delegation described Pakistan as ‘the only rock to count on’ and ‘the most faithful brother’.²⁵ The government also contributed actively to the Asian Population Conference (1963) where participants requested greater UN assistance for FP.²⁶

In both Thailand and the Philippines, close political and economic relations with Western countries was accompanied by the identification of FP as an issue on the national policy agenda from the mid- to late 1960s. Following the second

World War both countries formed close ties with the USA given their strategic importance to the US policy of 'containment' in Southeast Asia.²⁷ As a 'bastion against communist expansion', Thailand received over US\$2 billion of military aid from 1951-71 and US\$650 million of economic aid from 1950-75. Under a military government this aid was used to build a strong defence and police force, and a well-developed road system to combat counter-insurgency movements. Thailand's economic relations were also closely aligned with the West during this period and dated as far back as the Bowring Treaty (1855) which opened trade with colonial powers. During the 1950s and 1960s, the government of Prime Minister Sarit actively encouraged foreign investment and sought substantial loans and grants from foreign sources (primarily the USA and World Bank) for infrastructural investment.²⁸ The Philippines also maintained close relations with the USA following its liberation from Japanese occupation in 1945, and despite cutting the formal colonial bond in 1946, signing the Military Bases and Military Assistance Agreements in 1947 and a Mutual Defence Treaty in 1951. As in Thailand, large amounts of Western aid and foreign investment flowed into the country, and free trade between the Philippines and USA closely linked the economy to US markets. By 1970 US interests controlled more than 25% of the industrial sector and 80% of foreign equity in the Filipino economy.²⁹

Given close political and economic relations with Western countries, it appears that the policy contexts in both Thailand and the Philippines were more receptive to developments in the global population agenda. In Thailand it was a study submitted by the World Bank in 1958 which first drew the government's attention to the country's rapidly increasing population.³⁰ The study led to a series of population seminars during the 1960s attended by a wide range of government officials and external donors, followed by the declaration of the National Population Policy in 1970. In the Philippines the inflows of external aid included funds from USAID, the Ford Foundation and the Population Council to study population issues and initiate family planning activities. These efforts culminated in the creation of the Commission on Population in 1969 aimed at 'reducing population growth' as 'an urgent national need'.³¹

Shifting momentum in a decade of change: 1974 to 1984

It was at the UN-sponsored World Conference on Population held in Bucharest in August 1974 that disagreement regarding the link between population growth and development came to the fore at the global level. To a large extent, the conference was an extension of demands by members of the NAM and Group of 77 for a New International Economic Order (NIEO). Many developing countries rejected the argument that there was a need to limit population growth before economic development could occur. Instead the slogan 'development is the best contraceptive' was adopted, arguing that development (through a NIEO) would reduce population growth.

As president of the NAM, and as part of its anti-imperialist stance, the government of Algeria 'refused [FP]...as an alternative to development'. As argued by President Boumedienne at the UN General Assembly later the same year, there was a need for a radical restructuring of international economic

relations in favour of developing countries.³² It was 'constructing an economy capable of satisfying all the cultural and material needs of the Algerian people'³³ that would lead to a decline in fertility. For the Algerian economy such a strategy, in the form of a nationalised oil industry and membership of OPEC, was already seen as beneficial. Indeed, given a dramatic rise in oil revenues, Algeria was itself able to become an aid donor during the 1970s.³⁴ This seemed to reaffirm the government's position on North-South issues, and to keep FP off the policy agenda.

In remarkable contrast, the 1970s was a period of acceleration of the FP programme in Tunisia, with expanded access to a wider variety of contraceptives throughout the country.³⁵ At the same time the government continued to pursue a relatively open door policy towards Western countries, actively pursuing export markets, encouraging foreign investment, expanding the tourist industry and working closely with the World Bank.³⁶

In comparing Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) and Zambia, we can see that the 1970s was a period of civil war for Zimbabwe, with much of the health system (including FP services) breaking down. While the privately-administered Family Planning Association continued to operate in mainly urban areas, the already weak rural services became increasingly ineffective. Exacerbating this situation was the strong anti-FP stance of African nationalists who, as West writes, 'set out systematically to destroy the rural-based family planning infrastructure'.³⁷ Seeing FP as an integral part of the racist Rhodesian government, nationalists argued that the population problem lay in the crowding of blacks onto barren 'tribal trust lands', while a few thousand white farmers owned the most fertile parts of the country.

Zambia continued to vocalise the concerns of the developing world in such fora as the Organisation for African Unity (OAU), Group of 77, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Commonwealth. As an extension of Kaunda's 'humanism', Zambia's foreign policy focused on demands for greater political and economic equality for developing countries. In addition, the government was becoming increasingly preoccupied with regional and domestic problems, with struggles for independence throughout southern Africa bringing Zambia closer to a position of nonalignment. This led the government to join Algeria, China and other members of the NAM at the UN in opposing calls to limit population growth. Furthermore the government faced a worsening economy by the mid-1970s as world commodity prices dropped sharply, import prices soared, and government revenues declined. As a result, external debt grew between 1975-80 from US\$1.38 billion to US\$2.66 billion.³⁸ Amid domestic turmoil, FP was not an immediate priority on the policy agendas of either country.

This was not the case in either Bangladesh or Pakistan. War also disrupted the health system in the former East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) where, immediately following independence in 1971, the government followed a socialist route. The Mujib regime was suspicious of the West at this time because it believed the USA supported Pakistan during the war. The new government was not opposed to FP per se, holding a National Seminar on Population Control and Family Planning in 1972 and including FP in the country's first Five Year Plan (FYP) (1973-78),

but other priorities such as rebuilding the country's economy and responding to natural disasters seem to have taken precedence. After the assassination of President Mujibur Rahman in 1975, the new military government sought closer political and economic relations with Western countries. This brought substantial amounts of external aid and Bangladesh soon became one of the world's largest aid recipients.³⁹ For donors, such as USAID and the World Bank, FP needed to be high on the policy agenda. Land pressures had intensified, with population density increasing from 290 to 463 persons per square kilometre between 1950–1970.⁴⁰ Furthermore the average size of land ownership per household decreased from 1.09 to 0.78 hectares between 1960–80, with 45% of rural households having no land at all.⁴¹ It was thus from the mid-1970s that FP was given strong support by a government increasingly dependent on external aid, and by Western donors convinced of the need to limit population growth.

Relations between Pakistan and Western countries remained positive throughout the 1970s. Foreign aid as a proportion of GNP rose from 5.9% to 10.5% between 1973–77,⁴² with donors such as USAID remaining keen to support FP in Pakistan. Yet, perhaps surprisingly, this was a period of decline in government support for FP. As Khan writes, domestic politics rather than strained foreign relations hindered FP during this period. With the close identification of FP with Ayub Khan, the programme became highly politicised and therefore difficult to support for the new government.⁴³ More generally the struggle for political power during the Zulfikar Bhutto regime had wide-ranging effects on Pakistani society. This included sweeping reforms of the civil service beginning in 1973, which substantially reduced its policy making role. It also led the government to divert resources from the planned expansion of social services, such as the People's Health Scheme, to defence and public administration.⁴⁴

A comparison of Thailand and the Philippines shows that relations with the West only partly explains the difference in the effectiveness of their FP policies and programmes during this period. In Thailand the rise of communism in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia strengthened the government's strategic links with the USA, and the country served as a military base for large numbers of American troops. At the same time Thailand experienced its own civil unrest following the overthrow of the military government in 1973. By 1977, after several changes of government and the suppression of left-wing groups (ie labour unions, students and farmers), the military again took political control of the country.⁴⁵ These events seem to have had little effect on FP in Thailand. The programme continued to receive increasing funding, largely from external donors until 1981, when the government began to contribute a growing share. FP activities expanded accordingly, with targets set and met after each FYP.⁴⁶ It appears that, despite domestic upheavals among a small number of political elites, the bureaucracy remained a stable and functioning part of government. Thus, unlike in Pakistan, the implementation of FP policies and programmes remained effective.

In the Philippines, despite the imposition of martial law by President Marcos in 1972, there continued to be close ties with the USA. The country remained an important ally in Southeast Asia and continued to receive large amounts of military and economic aid. Between 1972–73 alone military aid increased from US\$18.5 million to US\$45.3 million.⁴⁷ Marcos also wooed the USA by allowing

foreign ownership of businesses, notably in the sugar and fruit industries. Given this positive relationship with the West, it is perhaps surprising that the FP programme in the Philippines received far less support from political elites than in Thailand during this period. While the government appeared strongly committed to FP in the late 1960s, when it was first placed on the policy agenda, subsequent phases in the policy process have been less effectively followed up.

Conflict and consensus: The 1984 Mexico City conference

While Algeria and Zambia were vocally against FP in 1974, their positions were markedly different by the time the International Population Conference was held in Mexico City in 1984. Overall there was increased consensus among developing countries, as well as donors and NGOs, on the need to limit population growth. An important part of the explanation for this dramatic change of position can be found in structural shifts in the global political economy which, *inter alia*, weakened the bargaining power of developing countries and increased their dependence on Western aid (eg the debt crisis). In turn, these shifts had implications for policy makers at the national level including the rise of neoliberal paradigms of development. Overall these changes created a policy context more conducive to FP. Most Western countries supported FP programmes in developing countries. This was justified by growing evidence from many countries (eg China, Indonesia, Thailand) that FP programmes could be effective at controlling fertility.

Shifts in the political economy of Algeria provide a good example of how this, in turn, created a more favourable policy context for FP. By the early 1980s revenues from oil and gas exports of the previous decade, accounting for nearly 90% of exports,⁴⁸ had dropped steeply with world oil prices. From being a relatively generous aid donor in the 1970s,⁴⁹ Algeria increasingly sought Western aid as food shortages, inflation and unemployment rose. The country was also in political limbo with the death of President Boumedienne in 1979 and the growing strength of Islamic fundamentalism. Faced with looming political and economic crises, the government turned away from the ideological position of the Nonaligned Movement and towards closer relations with the West. As Finkle and Crane write:

To gain economic concessions from the West, [the Algerian government] found it increasingly advantageous to pursue bilateral or regional approaches rather than the global strategy associated with the NIEO...the shift was a product of growing economic pressures combined with changing leadership priorities.⁵⁰

It was during this period of change that the government became more supportive of FP. In 1983 Algeria adopted its first Population Policy and, after signing the World Population Plan of Action at the Mexico Conference, led calls for more external aid for FP. This has been the position of the government since the mid-1980s, amid widespread reforms to bring the country closer to Western countries through the development of a more market-oriented economy, and increased foreign investment and trade.⁵¹ Resistance by Islamic fundamentalists

to such reforms has been disruptive and hindered the implementation of FP policies and programmes.

A comparison of FP policies in Zambia and Zimbabwe, in relation to shifts in their political economies, also suggests that closer relations with the West had a positive effect on putting FP on the policy agenda. In Zimbabwe relations with Western countries remained warm after the country gained independence from white minority rule in 1980. The West had imposed sanctions against Rhodesia between 1965-80, and was quick to provide aid to the new Zimbabwean government for rehabilitation and reconstruction. Extensive links were developed between the government and donor agencies, including funding for one-third of the FP programme in the early 1980s.⁵² FP services were also part of the government's strong emphasis on building the social sector. It was in this context that the implementation of the FP programme proved relatively effective (compared to Zambia), with an apparent increase in the contraceptive prevalence rate (from 27% to 43%) and a reported reduction of total fertility (from 6.6 to 5.4 births per woman) between 1984-88.⁵³

In Zambia it appears that FP was also placed on the policy agenda as a result of warming relations with Western countries during the 1980s. Throughout the 1970s world copper prices remained low,⁵⁴ which led to crises in public finances by the early 1980s. Faced with large deficit spending, rampant inflation (200% in 1984) and rising foreign debt (about one-half of export earnings), the government was increasingly in need of foreign assistance.⁵⁵ Between 1975-80 external aid increased by 400%, mainly from Western donors (eg Japan, the EC, and Scandinavian countries), and Western countries (eg Japan and the UK) became Zambia's main trading partners. With this economic dependence came policy conditionality. Between 1981-88 the World Bank and IMF withheld selected loans because of the government's resistance to 'stabilisation' policies.⁵⁶

The Zambian government's remarkable change of policy on FP took place within this shift in political and economic relations with the West. With increased attention to population growth in the late 1970s, eight major studies were published between 1981-84 which provided demographic and statistical evidence of the magnitude of this growth. These studies included the World Bank's *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action*; Zambia: *Population, Health and Nutrition Sector Review* (1984) and 1984 *World Development Report* on population growth and development; and UNEPA's *Zambia: Report of Mission on Needs Assessment for Population Assistance*.⁵⁷ These reports were accompanied by Zambia's participation in two major international conferences in 1984, the Second African Population Conference in Arusha and the International Population Conference in Mexico City. For both conferences the government needed to prepare statements on population growth in Zambia, an exercise which, along with analyses of the above studies, proved an important catalyst for changes in FP policy. As Hopkins and Siamwiza argue, these international initiatives were important in putting population on the policy agenda and raising awareness of the need for FP. The conferences, in particular, generated widespread media coverage and involved key government officials.⁵⁸ It was in this very changed policy environment that President Kaunda instructed

the National Commission for Development Planning to formulate the country's first Population Policy in 1985.⁵⁹

While it appears that closer relations with the West have led to a shift towards greater support for FP in Algeria and Zambia, a comparative analysis of the Philippines/Thailand and Pakistan/Bangladesh shows that this link has been less clear. In Thailand the economy continued to grow quickly throughout the 1980s despite a similar starting point (in terms of GNP per capita during the 1960s) to the Philippines.⁶⁰ GNP per capita doubled between 1971–90,⁶¹ and the economic growth rate reached double digits between 1986–90.⁶² Trade and investment relations with Japan and other ASEAN members also thrived throughout this period, as the country became increasingly integrated with the Pacific Rim and world economy. Domestically challenges for political power among political elites continued. However, these periodic struggles did not disturb the country's essentially outward-looking, Western-orientated political economy. Nor did it deter the firm commitment by successive governments to FP policies and programmes. By 1987–91 the government was providing about 87% of the funding for FP.⁶³

From the early 1980s differences between the political economies of Thailand and the Philippines were increasingly apparent. The economy of the Philippines suffered badly during the same period, with negative real growth during the mid-1980s. Foreign debt consumed about half the national income, exports of major commodities (eg sugar) fell by more than two-thirds and levels of poverty increased throughout the country. By 1988 38% of the population lived below the poverty line compared with 21% in 1971.⁶⁴ These economic problems led to major cuts in public expenditure for social welfare and development purposes, including FP. Structural adjustment which included measures to reduce public spending was introduced to the country in the late 1970s.⁶⁵

But, unlike in Algeria and Zambia, these economic problems did not lead to improvements in FP. Indeed, the FP programme performed poorly throughout the 1980s in comparison with Thailand, with less steep and consistent declines in fertility rates and lower use of contraception. An important explanation for this lack of effectiveness is the impact of domestic upheavals on the country's response to growing economic crisis. By the late 1970s rampant corruption, aid dependency, indebtedness and militarism brought together a diverse popular movement against President Marcos. The struggle for political power which ensued, continuing after the overthrow of the Marcos regime in 1986, led to much social unrest. During this period relations with the West were also unstable. Tensions grew with the USA as President Carter pressured the government on human rights and Marcos threatened to evict Americans from the country in response.⁶⁶ Under President Aquino, a policy of self-sufficiency was adopted which sought to reduce the country's dependence on foreign aid.⁶⁷ For the FP programme in the Philippines, the combination of economic and political upheaval created a disabling policy context. The economic crisis meant diminishing means to pay for FP; the political crisis meant it was difficult for government to act decisively. As a result, it appears that the implementation of FP programmes suffered accordingly.

The impact of political and economic changes on FP is less clear for

Bangladesh and Pakistan. During the 1980s both countries experienced similar economic problems with declining terms of trade and growing foreign debt. In Bangladesh this brought rising import prices in the face of shrinking export markets.⁶⁸ Unemployment reached 30% in 1986 with 80% of the population living below the poverty line.⁶⁹ Western aid continued to keep the country afloat, increasing from 8.5% of GDP in 1974–75 to 13.7% in 1981–82.⁷⁰ In Pakistan, despite annual growth rates of GDP at around 6% between 1977–86, assisted by the growth in remittances from overseas workers in the Middle East, the cost of servicing foreign debt was escalating and sources of further loans in decline. Again this was mitigated by Western aid, especially following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.⁷¹

The difference between the two countries appears to lie more in their domestic politics and, more specifically, the contexts in which Western donors have sought to influence policy making in favour of FP. In Bangladesh heavy dependence on foreign aid has been accompanied by a direct role by donors in the policy making process. This has taken the form of an aid consortium, created in 1973 and led by the World Bank, whose reports on the Bangladesh economy and aspects of development have been the main source of information for other donors and even the government.⁷² It is perhaps partly because FP has remained high on the agenda of donors, and been a regular source of foreign aid, that the government has also given FP a high priority. In contrast, domestic politics in Pakistan was much less subject to the influence of donors. While foreign aid was clearly important, and there were close links between policy elites and Western donors, the country's border with Afghanistan gave it greater strategic importance and, hence, a degree of bargaining power that Bangladesh did not have. This may explain why expenditure on debt repayment and defence grew rapidly during this period, while spending on the social sectors suffered. Between 1977–85 Pakistan had one of the worst records of providing social services, with only five countries in the world spending less on health. This also affected allocations for FP, which declined from Rs.202 million in 1976–77 to Rs.177 million in 1982–83.⁷³ This low priority for social spending suggests that policy elites were more concerned with strategic matters. It was not until the latter half of the 1980s that the government came under increasing pressure from the World Bank, USAID and other donors 'to show that something was being done in primary education, health, and population'.⁷⁴ The importance of aid to Pakistan brought assurances from policy elites that population was high on their agenda. In practice these assurances of political commitment have yet to be transformed into effectively implemented programmes.

Towards a new consensus: the 1994 Cairo conference and beyond

The International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in September 1994, was the third UN-sponsored conference on population. The immediate responses to the conference, including the three Preparatory Committee meetings organised to encourage broad consultation, have ranged from high praise for participants for laying a 'path to a better reality',⁷⁵ to dismissal of the new Population Plan of Action as emerging from a 'misconceived'

international conference.⁷⁶ Many argue that a global consensus has emerged. For example, Cassen argues that 'there is a growing convergence of views...on the consequences of rapid population growth in developing countries...and what should be the principal elements of population policy'.⁷⁷ Others believe that this consensus has been won by avoiding key sensitive issues and keeping commitments vague.

One subject on which there has been clearer agreement has been the concept of reproductive health. While opinion has continued to vary as to how inclusive the concept should be,⁷⁸ most agree that reproductive health can be broadly defined as 'a comprehensive approach to women's health and wellbeing, that includes fertility and infertility, contraception, abortion, childbearing, maternal morbidity and mortality, sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, menstruation and menopause'.⁷⁹ As Lane writes, this holistic approach to population and fertility has arisen as a reaction from women's organisations,⁸⁰ academic researchers (notably social scientists), and NGOs against the long-established population control approach. Eschewing a view of women focused on fertility and contraceptive behaviour, this broad coalition of interest groups has effectively put reproductive health on national and international policy agendas. Institutional advocates of reproductive health include the UN Population Fund, World Health Organization, Ford Foundation, Population Council, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), and UK Overseas Development Administration.⁸¹ It has been this global support for reproductive health which explains the most striking feature of the Cairo conference, the prominence of women as national delegates and as representatives of NGOs. As a reflection of the conference's focus on women and their empowerment, an unprecedented one-third of the 18 000 delegates to the conference were women. Making a particularly lasting impact was Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland.⁸²

The participation of the eight case study countries at the Cairo conference generally reflected little change from policies held since the late 1980s. The governments of Thailand, Bangladesh, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tunisia and Algeria remained supportive of IP in their own countries. With the exception of Thailand, which has virtually taken over from donors (notably USAID) the financing of policies and programmes, the remaining governments have sought greater assistance from donors to reach policy objectives. For example, at meetings of the Preparatory Committee, the Bangladesh delegation pointed firmly to the need for 'increased technical and financial support' from high-income countries if serious efforts were to be made to carry out the new Population Plan of Action.⁸³ Similarly the Algerian delegate strongly criticised some donor countries for failing to 'put their money where their mouth is', setting objectives but offering too little to help meet them.

For the Philippines and Pakistan, the objections of the Vatican and some Islamic governments (eg those of Iraq and Libya), did not prevent their support in principle for the Plan of Action. Particular attention was paid by the Western media to the speeches of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan who defied critics at home by attending the conference. Declaring that she would not allow 'a vocal, narrow-minded minority to dictate an agenda of backwardness', she spoke of the problem of rapid population growth in Pakistan and called on the

donor community to provide increased assistance.⁸⁴ In the Philippines, public demonstrations by the Catholic Church against abortion failed to deter the government from supporting the strengthening of FP policies and programmes.

Conclusion

This paper has analysed the historical determinants of family planning policies and programmes in four pairs of developing countries. It was found that there has been a complex interaction between policy context, process and actors. Using a policy analysis framework, comparisons were used to identify differences in how policies have been made and, in particular, whether global-level policy making can influence why countries have had a weaker or stronger commitment to FP.

Policy making at the global level can take many forms including high-profile international conferences, low-key technical meetings and research on population issues. It was found that, under certain circumstances, policy making at the global level can influence whether FP is placed on the policy agenda at the national level. The degree of influence these activities exert has depended on both the political ideology of policy elites, and economic relations with Western countries. Where policy elites have been more open to Western ideas, FP has appeared earlier on national policy agendas. This finding is best supported over the period of study by Algeria/Tunisia and Zambia/Zimbabwe. In Algeria and Zambia before the 1980s, where there were unreceptive environments, strong anti-imperialist feelings among political leaders placed a barrier against Western-led efforts to promote FP at the global level. Then, amid shifts in political ideology from the early 1980s, global level activities (eg the Mexico conference) helped mobilise increased national attention to FP.

In the other two pairs of countries, differences in political economy are also useful in explaining policy initiation, although less so for understanding how FP has fared at subsequent stages of the policy process (ie formulation and implementation). In Pakistan/Bangladesh and the Philippines/Thailand, close political and economic relations with the West during the 1960s were an important contributor to FP being put on the policy agenda at an early date. However, beyond the identification of FP as a policy issue, close relations were insufficient to ensure that effective formulation and implementation of FP policies were achieved. Stronger commitment to programmes occurred in Thailand from the 1970s and Zimbabwe from the 1980s, but commitment weakened in the Philippines and Pakistan. This difference suggests the need to consider domestic factors (ie whether sufficient resources were made available to implement programmes) alongside global factors. Overall it can be concluded that global initiatives can be an effective means of influencing national policy makers and putting issues on the policy agenda, but this must take place within a receptive context of broader political and economic relations.

Interestingly the analysis did not find absolute level of economic development to be related to the timing when FP appeared on national policy agendas. For example, rising oil revenues during the 1970s put Algeria on a much stronger economic footing than Tunisia. Yet Tunisian policy makers has demonstrated a

consistent commitment to FP from the 1960s. Similarly the Zambian government paid little attention to FP until after the boom years of the 1970s, while the Zimbabwean government gave immediate support to FP after many years of war with the white Rhodesian government. It appears that commitment to FP has been stronger where policy makers have linked economic development (regardless of its absolute level) with the need to limit population growth. In countries where this argument was taken up by policy elites (eg Pakistan and Thailand in the 1960s) greater commitment to FP policies and programmes can be found. Where this argument was rejected (eg Zambia, Algeria), FP was kept off the policy agenda. In short, it appears that sustained commitment to FP by policy makers has been more significant in creating effective policies and programmes than a given level of economic development.

Notes

The authors would especially like to thank Professor John Cleland and Louisiana Lush, Centre for Population Studies, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine for their essential contribution to this work.

¹ It is estimated that in 1991 international population assistance totalled US\$1.3 billion per year. The total current annual expenditure on family planning by couples, government and donors is estimated at US\$4.5 billion. See UN Population Fund, *Global Population Assistance Report, 1982-1991*, New York: UNFPA; and B Robey, S Rutstein & I Morris, 'The fertility decline in developing countries', *Scientific American*, 269 (6), 1993, pp 30-37.

² Theme based conferences include the UN Conference on Environment and Development (1992), World Summit for Social Development (1995) and UN Fourth World Conference on Women (1995).

³ The report of this study is K Lee, G Walt, L Lush & J Cleland, *Population Policies and Programmes: Determinants and Consequences in Eight Developing Countries*, London: School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine/UNFPA, June 1995. The authors of this paper coordinated the policy analysis carried out by eight country directors. This paper draws and builds on the resulting case study reports which were as follows: Professor Fedivina Carino, *Population Policy in the Philippines*, College of Public Administration, University of the Philippines; Dr Kua Wongboonsin, *Population Policy and Programmes in Thailand*, Director, Institute of Population Studies, Chulalongkorn University; Dr Nebiha Gueddama, *Population Policies and Programmes: Determinants and Consequences in Tunisia (1956-1992)*, Former Secretary of State to the Prime Minister in Charge of Women and Family Affairs; Dr Ali Kouaouer, *The Algerian Population Policy*, Directeur, Institut des Sciences Sociales, Université de Blida; Lumba Kalumba, *Determinants and Consequences of Population Policy and Programmes in Zambia*, Consultant; Leonard Maveneka, *Family Planning Policy Determinants: The Zimbabwe Case*, Editor, *Southern African Economist*; Ayesha Khan, *Population Policies and Programmes in Pakistan*, Consultant; Dr Rausul Mahmood, *Determinants of Population Policies and Programmes in Bangladesh*, Senior Research Fellow, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies.

⁴ An obvious exception to this generalisation is China where, in the early 1970s, vigorous promotion of FP began despite relative isolation of the government from international pressures. See S Conley & S Camp, *China's Family Planning Program: Challenging the Myths*, Washington, DC: Population Crisis Committee, 1992.

⁵ For a discussion of various development strategies, including 'stages of economic growth', dependency theory and neoliberalism, see M Todaro, 'The meaning of development' in *Economics for a developing world*, London: Longman, 1992, Chapter 6.

⁶ P Demeny, 'Population policy and the international donor community: a perspective on the next decade', *Population and Development Review*, 3 (1), 1977, pp 113-122.

⁷ O Noman, *The Political Economy of Pakistan 1947-85*, London: KPI, 1988, p 14.

⁸ Interview with Alamgir Kabir, Vice President (1960-72) and President (1976) of the Family Planning Association of Bangladesh, as quoted in Mahmood, *Bangladesh*, p 17.

⁹ *The Pakistan Times*, 25 February 1959, as quoted in Khan, *Pakistan*, p 4.

¹⁰ These were the Bulawayo Family Planning Association, created as a local offshoot of the Family Planning Association of Great Britain, and the Salisbury Family Planning Association.

- ¹¹ Maveneka, *Zimbabwe*, pp 2–3.
- ¹² J Finkle & B Crane, 'Ideology and politics at Mexico City: the United States at the 1984 International Conference on Population', *Population and Development Review*, 11 (1), 1985, pp 1–28.
- ¹³ P Donaldson & A Tsui, 'The International Family Planning Movement', *Population Bulletin*, 45(3), 1990, pp. 1–46.
- ¹⁴ J Finkle & C McIntosh (eds), *The New Politics of Population: Conflict and Consensus in Family Planning*, New York: Population Council, 1994, pp 6–8.
- ¹⁵ For example see A Coale & E Hoover, *Population Growth and Economic Development in Low-income Countries: A Case Study of India's Prospects*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958.
- ¹⁶ Quoted in Gueddana, *Tunisia*, p 7.
- ¹⁷ C Patton, *The United Nations and the Politics of Population, 1960–1974*, PhD thesis, New York: Columbia University, 1984, p 57.
- ¹⁸ Kouaouci, *Algeria*, pp 6–7.
- ¹⁹ As quoted in *ibid*, p 14.
- ²⁰ UNFPA, *Zambia: Report of Mission on Needs Assessment for Population Assistance*, Report No 63, New York, 1983, p 10.
- ²¹ M Burdette, *Zambia: Between Two Worlds*, Boulder, CO: Westview, 1988, pp 77–80.
- ²² UNFPA, 1983, *Zambia*, p 13.
- ²³ Kalumba, *Zambia*; and T Hopkins & R Sianiwiza, 'Converging forces: processes leading to the rethinking of population policy in Zambia' in K Osei-Hwedie & M Ndulo (eds), *Issues in Zambian Development*, Zaire: Omenana, 1985, pp 72–96.
- ²⁴ J Finkle, 'The political environment of population control in India and Pakistan' in R Clinton, W Flash & R Godwin (eds), *Political Science in Population Studies*, Lexington, VA: Lexington Books, 1972, p 121.
- ²⁵ Patton, *The United Nations and the politics of Population*, pp 66–67.
- ²⁶ The Asian Population Conference, held in New Delhi in 1963, was sponsored by the UN Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE). The conference was attended by over 200 delegates from 14 Asian countries.
- ²⁷ The policy of containment was based on the perceived need in US foreign policy to establish a strategic dam against the spread of communism in such regions as Southeast Asia and Latin America. For a discussion see S Hoffman, *Primacy or World Order: American Foreign Policy Since the Cold War*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978.
- ²⁸ C Keyes, *Thailand: Buddhist Kingdom as Modern Nation-State*, Boulder, CO: Westview, 1989, pp 113–114, 153.
- ²⁹ J Goodno, *The Philippines: Land of Broken Promises*, London: Zed, 1991, p 48.
- ³⁰ Wongboonsin, *Thailand*, p 2.
- ³¹ Carino, *Philippines*, pp 3–5.
- ³² UN General Assembly Resolution 3201(XXIX), 1 May 1974.
- ³³ As quoted in Kouaouci, *Algeria*, p 13.
- ³⁴ World Bank, *World Development Report*, Washington, DC: World Bank, 1980, Table 16.
- ³⁵ Gueddana, *Tunisia*, pp 23–24.
- ³⁶ W Ruf, 'Tunisia: contemporary politics' in R Lawless & A Findlay (eds), *North Africa: Contemporary Politics and Economic Development*, London: Croom Helm, 1984, pp 107–108.
- ³⁷ M West, 'Nationalism, race, and gender: the politics of family planning in Zimbabwe, 1957–1990,' *Social History of Medicine*, 7 (3), 1994, pp. 447–471.
- ³⁸ Burdette, *Zambia*, p 113.
- ³⁹ Mahmood, *Bangladesh*, pp 24, 28.
- ⁴⁰ 'Population misconceptions,' *The Economist*, 28 May 1994, pp 121–122.
- ⁴¹ UNFPA, *Bangladesh: Report of the Second Mission on Needs Assessment for Population Assistance*, New York: UNFPA, 1986, pp 1, 8–9.
- ⁴² Noman, *The Political Economy of Pakistan*, p 91.
- ⁴³ Khan, *Pakistan*, pp 12–14.
- ⁴⁴ Noman, *The Political Economy of Pakistan*, pp 61–64, 86.
- ⁴⁵ Keyes, *Thailand*, pp 100–114.
- ⁴⁶ Wongboonsin, *Thailand*, p 17.
- ⁴⁷ Goodno, *The Philippines*, pp 67–68.
- ⁴⁸ W Stephen, *Primary Health Care in the Arab World*, Wells: Somerset House, 1992, p 28.
- ⁴⁹ Algeria's aid budget peaked at 0.88% of GNP in 1979 but by 1983 had declined to 0.09% of GNP. See World Bank, *World Development Report*, Washington, DC: 1985, Table 16.
- ⁵⁰ Finkle & Crane, 'Ideology and politics at Mexico City', p 5.
- ⁵¹ Kouaouci, *Algeria*, p 24.
- ⁵² E Boohene, *Establishment of a Secretariat for Population Policy and Development*, Report to the Ministry of Health, Zimbabwe, 1988.

- ⁵¹ Maveneka, *Zimbabwe*, pp 23, 29.
- ⁵² In 1984 copper prices were almost 60% lower than in 1974. Hopkins & Siamwiza, 'Converging forces', p 75.
- ⁵³ Burdette, *Zambia*, pp 122-127; and Hopkins & Siamwiza, 'Converging forces', p 75.
- ⁵⁴ Burdette, *Zambia*, pp 123, 156-157.
- ⁵⁵ World Bank, *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action*, Washington, DC: 1981; World Bank, *Zambia: Population, Health and Nutrition Sector Review*, Washington, DC: 1984; World Bank, *World Development Report*, Washington, DC: 1984; UNFPA, *Zambia: Report of Mission on Needs Assessment for Population Assistance*, New York, 1984.
- ⁵⁶ Hopkins & Siamwiza, 'Converging forces', p 72.
- ⁵⁷ Kalumba, *Zambia*, p 14.
- ⁵⁸ 'The answer's a tomato,' *The Economist*, 20 May 1994, p 86.
- ⁵⁹ Donaldson & Tsui, *The International Family Planning Movement*, p 37.
- ⁶⁰ UNFPA, *Thailand, Programme Review and Strategy Development Report*, New York: UNFPA, 1991, p 12.
- ⁶¹ Wongboonsin, *Thailand*, p 17.
- ⁶² 'The answer's a tomato,' p 86.
- ⁶³ Carino, *Philippines*, p 9.
- ⁶⁴ Goodino, *The Philippines*, p 73.
- ⁶⁵ Carino, *Philippines*, p 9.
- ⁶⁶ R. Sobhan, *The Crisis of External Dependence. The Political Economy of Foreign Aid in Bangladesh*, Dhaka: University Press, 1982, pp 20-24.
- ⁶⁷ UNFPA, 1986, *Bangladesh*, pp 8-9.
- ⁶⁸ Sobhan, *The Crisis of External Dependence*, p 8.
- ⁶⁹ Noman, *The Political Economy of Pakistan*, p 174.
- ⁷⁰ Sobhan, *The Crisis of External Dependence*, pp 166-201.
- ⁷¹ Noman, *The Political Economy of Pakistan*, p 174.
- ⁷² Khan, *Pakistan*, p 24.
- ⁷³ Nafis Sadik, UNFPA Executive Director, Cairo, 1994.
- ⁷⁴ A Hamilton, 'Population is not the agenda,' *Observer*, 11 September 1994, p 25.
- ⁷⁵ R Cassen, *Population Policy: A New Consensus*, Washington, DC: Overseas Development Council, 1994, pp 66-67.
- ⁷⁶ The UK Overseas Development Administration, for example, defines reproductive health as 'making pregnancy and childbirth safer, preventing and treating infections of the reproductive system (including HIV infection), helping infertile couples and reducing the incidence of genital mutilation'. See L. Chalker, 'Children by choice not chance,' Speech to the Royal Society, London, 11 July 1994.
- ⁷⁷ S Lane, 'From population control to reproductive health: an emerging policy agenda,' *Social Science and Medicine*, 39 (9), 1994, pp 1303-1314.
- ⁷⁸ The support of many women's organisations led to the Women's Declaration on Population Policies of 1994 by the International Women's Health Coalition based in New York.
- ⁷⁹ It is interesting to note that UNFPA continues to use the concept of 'safe motherhood and family planning' to define its activities. This differs from reproductive health in its narrower focus on maternal and child health, its avoidance of abortion related activities, and its emphasis on 'birth spacing' as opposed to 'birth control'. See UNFPA, *Annual Report*, New York, 1994.
- ⁸⁰ I. O'Hanlon, 'Too big for her boots,' *Independent*, 11 September 1994.
- ⁸¹ Quoted in S Johnson, *World Population - Turning the Tide: Three Decades of Progress*, London: Graham & Trotman, 1994, p 358.
- ⁸² Quoted in D Willey, 'Women take the lead in Cairo battle of sexes,' *Observer*, 11 September 1994.

Rethinking the international division of labour in the context of globalisation

JAMES H MITTELMAN

Of all the great changes involved in restructuring the world today, the single most important force may prove to be globalisation. A market-driven and multidimensional process, globalisation renders obsolete invented divisions of the world into developed and developing countries, industrialised and industrialising nations, and core and periphery. The familiar imagery of a core, semiperiphery, and periphery no longer applies to a new structure that envelopes both vertically integrated regional divisions of labour based on the distinctive comparative advantages of different locations, and horizontally diversified networks which extend their activities into neighbouring countries as part of corporate strategies of diversification and globalisation. The old categories do not capture the intricacy of the integration of the world economy as well as the ways it constrains all regions and states to adjust to transnational capital. The global transformation now underway not only slices across former divisions of labour and geographically reorganises economic activities, but also limits state autonomy and infringes sovereignty.

In a notable attempt to explain vast changes in the global political economy, Karl Polanyi held that the socially disruptive and polarising tendencies in the world economy were generated by what he called a self-regulating market, not a spontaneous phenomenon but the result of coercive power in the service of a utopian idea.¹ He traced the tendencies in the world economy that caused the conjuncture of the 1930s and produced—out of a breakdown in liberal-economic structures—the onset of depression, fascism, unemployment and resurgent nationalism, collectively a partial negation of economic globalisation, leading to world war.

Like the global economy of the 1930s, the contemporary globalisation process represents unprecedented market expansion accompanied by widespread structural disruptions. While escalating at a world level, globalisation must be regarded as problematic, incomplete and contradictory—issues to be taken up below. By globalisation, I mean the compression of the time and space aspects of social relations, a phenomenon that allows the economy, politics and culture of one country to penetrate another.² A hybrid system, globalisation intensifies interactions among, and simultaneously undermines, nation states. Although globalisation is frequently characterised as a homogenising force, it fuses with local conditions in diverse ways, thereby generating, not eroding, striking differences among social formations. Fundamentally an outgrowth of the bedrock of capital accumulation, this structure embraces and yet differs in

important respects from trends posited by theorists of the international division of labour (IDL) and the new international division of labour (NIDL), two theses which provide both a point of entry for analysing global restructuring and an opportunity for developing an alternative formulation.

To examine major facets of global restructuring, inquiry must revisit, even if only sketchily, previous attempts to come to grips with novel systems of production, the distribution of rewards, and their political and social consequences. Briefly reviewing classical theories of the IDL, though not allowing us to explore the far more complex features of contemporary capitalism, offers a fruitful way of posing relevant theoretical questions for later discussion. Plainly, it will be important to understand why and how classical authors understood and defined the IDL. Even from a short synopsis, it should be apparent that there are serious disagreements not only about what engenders the division of labour, but even about what constitutes its essential characteristics. The IDL interpretation must be supplemented by the idea of a NIDL, which seeks to explain the shift of manufacturing from advanced capitalist to developing countries—a spatial reorganisation of production in the second half of the twentieth century. After subjecting the NIDL thesis to critical scrutiny, I will propose another perspective, which might be called the global division of labour (GDL).

My main argument is that the GDL involves a restructuring among world regions including their constituent units, notably states and export networks. This approach focuses on the interpenetration of global processes, regional dynamics and local conditions. One element of reordering this hierarchical system is massive transfers of population from the Third World, Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union to the advanced capitalist countries, though there are also significant migratory flows within the South. Acting as magnets attracting imports of labour, global commodity chains form networks that interlink multiple production processes as well as buyers and sellers. Mediating among these macro-political and economic structures are micro-patterns rooted in culture—family, communal, and ethnic ties.¹ Culture becomes a switch on the tracks of regulation and segmentation of the labour market.

Since prior meanings assigned to the term division of labour underpin my argument about the GDL, the first section of this paper examines the concept of IDL in classical political economy, while the second turns to the NIDL hypothesis. Next, by focusing on the interactions among levels of analysis—regionalism, migration, commodity chains and cultural forces—in a globalising division of labour, I will attempt to offer an alternative explanation of restructuring. On the basis of a juxtaposition of these three formulations—IDL, NIDL and GDL—the conclusion identifies trends and notes major aspects of an integrating and yet disintegrating world order, today marked both by the persistence of the nation-state system and a challenge from different types of non-state actors. Whereas states are increasingly subject to internal pressure for accountability to the governed, the agencies and forces of economic globalisation are largely unaccountable to any group of citizens. The contradiction between the emergence of a clear preference for democracy in national political units and the lack of means to ensure accountability in world markets is a central feature of global restructuring.

The old division of labour

Classical political economy

As first studied by Adam Smith, David Ricardo and Karl Marx, the division of labour refers to novel forms of specialisation separating the production process into compartments, each one performing different tasks, with varying rates of profit and implications for comparative advantages in trade. Smith's 1776 treatise on the division of labour concerned the wealth of all nations and became the seedbed of modern theories. Positing a 'propensity to truck and barter' innate in humankind, Smith provided the first major attempt to examine the potential for the emergence of a complex division of labour that later developed during the industrial revolution and on the Continent.

The emerging industrial form of production, Smith argued, entailed the erosion of artisan skills and their replacement not by collaboration among several craftsmen but by coordination among a large number of people carrying out specific, assigned activities, enabling any one person to do the work of many. The combined labour of a work force in a single establishment outstripped the total effort of individual workers in the old system. Productivity gains were attributable to increases in dexterity because of the reduction of tasks to discrete operations, savings in time lost passing from one activity to another, and inventiveness stemming from intimate familiarity with and attentiveness to a single function. This specialisation was paralleled by differentiation in other spheres as well—politics and society—as outlined in Smith's first book, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, published in 1759.⁴ Although classical political economists are frequently portrayed as positing that society is in large part driven by self-interest, Smith in fact also emphasised that in civil society, social propensities constrain egoism and help to avert discord. *The Theory* contains ample discussion of 'fellow feeling', personal conduct, rules of justice and morality.

Smith remained optimistic that the evolving division of labour would be a propellant for higher standards of living and thus offer enormous benefits, but was not unaware of the disruptive and deleterious consequences of repetition and overspecialisation. Notwithstanding the dehumanisation of work in factories, he was sanguine about economic society insofar as the state provides public goods (notably in the realm of culture and education) to facilitate commerce, sufficient justice to protect from oppression and to secure property rights, and security from invasion. While market society necessitates a relatively autonomous state to sustain *laissez faire* and the division of labour, the scope of the domestic market is an inherent limitation. Whereas in inland, scattered or scarcely populated areas, individuals retain the need to be able to do many kinds of work, it is trade that increases the reach of the market.

Entering the debate at this juncture, Ricardo argued that commodities are valued according to the quantity of labour required for their production and can be enhanced through foreign trade, for the rules which govern the relative value of commodities in one country do not regulate the relative value of commodities exchanged among countries. Through the efficacious use of 'the peculiar powers bestowed by nature', each country 'distributes labour most effectively and most

economically: while by increasing the general mass of productions, it diffuses general benefit, and binds together by one common tie of interest and intercourse, the universal society of nations throughout the civilised world'.⁵ Hence Ricardo's basic law of comparative advantage, which undergirds a good deal of contemporary theory, may be summarised as follows: the pattern of international trade is dependent on the principle of comparative labour costs, which holds that if two countries engage in trade relations, each one producing the same commodities, one country would sell the commodity in which its relative (rather than absolute) cost was lower and, similarly, the other country would sell the commodity in which its own cost was low. Like Smith's concept of the division of labour, Ricardo's theory of comparative advantage presupposes the notion of civil society and the separation of politics and economics.

Viewing the division of labour as the 'prevalent characteristic of capitalism', Marx did not share Smith's and Ricardo's faith in the beneficial consequences of the division of labour in manufacturing, where tasks are partitioned and repartitioned, and of the division of labour in society as a whole. Marx maintained that the division of labour in manufacturing brings the labourer face to face with the material power of the production process, cutting down the worker to a detail labourer. Knowledge, judgement and will are formally exercised only for the factory as a whole, often crippling the worker's body and mind as well. The detailed division of labour—subdivisions of tasks within industries—is thus distinguished from the social division of labour, which sets off whole groups from one another in society. Both criticising and building on the theoretical foundations laid by Smith and Ricardo, Marx thus sought to recast their arguments and to make explicit a political dimension of division of labour theory.

Sociological theory

Notwithstanding the attempt by classical political economists to interweave economic theory and what is now regarded as industrial sociology, there were only minor advances in the theory of division of labour between the 19th century and the second half of the twentieth century, save the interventions of Max Weber and Emile Durkheim. Raising quite different questions from the debate over the costs and benefits of increases in productivity surrounding the IDL, sociologists have given specific meaning to the notion of division of labour. Emphasising 'specialisation of function' as a motor force in history, Weber held that 'functions may be differentiated according to the type of work, so that the product is brought to completion only by combining, simultaneously or successively, the work of a large number of persons'.⁶ To develop this basic proposition, he focused on aspects of the social relations engendered by the division of labour, and established a sociological typology applying to historical cases though not to the division of labour or the economy in general. Weber nonetheless envisaged the advance of the division of labour alongside the centralisation of the means of administration—an overall trend towards bureaucratic specialisation in all spheres of social life.

For Durkheim, the major issue is the structurally disruptive and cohesive

tendencies in the division of labour, which ultimately furthers social integration or what he calls organic solidarity. Unlike mechanical social orders held together by common beliefs and values, modern organic societies rest on the complementarity of different specialised functions. In transitions where the division of labour replaces mechanical solidarity without yet developing the morality (ie solidarity) to mitigate social tensions, an increased volume and density of interactions entail a prevalence of crime, economic crises, conflicts between labour and capital, and emigration. However, these forms of *anomie* would lessen, while flexibility and individual freedom would accompany, an increasing specialisation in the division of labour, which in turn promotes an integration of society.

Old theories, new realities

From this brief overview of the classical writers, it is clear that IDL theory provides a springboard for understanding modern capital accumulation, the expansion of the market presently manifest in economic globalisation and the social consequences of these processes. What is lacking in the theory, however, reflects the general limits of the classical tradition and has important implications for the contemporary period. Although the classical school allowed for the state to be the guarantor of the division of labour in a laissez-faire economy, democratic or liberal forms of state were not deemed necessary. (Utilitarians like Jeremy Bentham and, later, liberals such as John Stuart Mill were concerned with forms of state. Conservative reformers like Bismarck and mercantilists, most notably Friedrich List, regarded the state as central to capital accumulation.)

The risk in highlighting the logic of capital and labour costs while underrating the role of the state lies in invoking economism linked to the rising power of capitalism, a tendency somewhat corrected by the followers of Weber, who emphasise divisions of labour by age, race, ethnicity and gender.⁷ Though not silent about the role of culture, classical authors said relatively little about the attitudes, beliefs and habits of different strata in the international division of labour. Nowhere did they analyse, say, the constraints that some cultures place on the mobility of labour (eg as do contemporary Islamic communities in rural Malaysia). In fact, classical political economy is not explicit about the spatial dimensions of the division of labour—a curious deficiency addressed in the NIDL thesis.

The new international division of labour

Apart from contributions by Weber and Durkheim, the concept of division of labour remained largely dormant until the beginning of a spatial reorganisation of production involving the formation and expansion of a world market for labour and production sites in the 1960s. Varying in emphasis from a neo-Smithian focus on changes in the world market to a neo-Ricardian one on capital exports, NIDL theorists sought to explain the shift of manufacturing from advanced capitalist to developing countries, with the fragmentation of production

and the transfer of low skill jobs, while the bulk of R&D activities was retained in the heartlands of world capitalism. Fröbel *et al.* hold that the traditional international division of labour in which the Third World was relegated to a producer of raw materials has markedly changed.⁸ Transnational corporations have established a global manufacturing system based on labour-intensive export platforms in low wage areas. This move toward industrialisation in the Third World and a decline in manufacturing relative to gross domestic product (GDP) in the West and Japan are driven by the structural capitalist imperative to maximise profits under conditions of heightened global competition.

With new technologies, especially space-shrinking systems of transport and communications, the manufacturing sites are increasingly independent of geographical distance. Capital now searches not only for fresh markets but also to incorporate new groups into the labour force. Initially through the 'global assembly line' of textiles, many Third World women have become part of the international working class. It was the electronics industry which developed the first truly integrated world assembly line.

Contributing powerfully to understanding dramatic changes in the division of labour, Fröbelians clearly identified the growing power and sophistication of transnational capital and its ability to optimise differing opportunities for profit by decentralising production across the globe.⁹ This approach also provides an important angle for studying North-South relations, especially large-scale migrations of capital to the Third World and specific linkages that increasingly differentiate countries at various levels of development.

The NIDL thesis, however, overstates the significance of cheap labour as the propellant of capital around the globe. Low wages do not explain decisions of transnational corporations to touch down where labour is relatively costly.¹⁰ Locational decisions represent a mix of considerations and often favour countries such as Singapore where labour costs exceed those in neighbouring countries. A 1993 study of 47 countries by Business Environment Risk Intelligence (a private association with headquarters in Geneva, and operations in the USA) shows that on the basis of a weighted composite index, which measures the number of skilled and technically trained people against market requirements, the Singaporean labour force ranks best in the world in productivity—ahead of its counterparts in runners-up Switzerland, Japan and Belgium.¹¹ Table I is a labour force evaluation which reflects four indices: legal framework (a weighted average of 30%), relative productivity (ie output per worker day against wages—30%), worker attitude (25%), and technical skills (25%).

Another difficulty with the NIDL thesis is that the old international division of labour (for example, in agriculture) has not disappeared but coexists with the new division, forming what might be regarded as an articulation of the old and the new, or a redivision of labour. If indeed the issue is to identify continuities and discontinuities, it is appropriate to ask, exactly what is new about the new international division of labour? The claim that industrialisation in the Third World is new neglects the establishment of import-substituting industries in Argentina, Brazil and Mexico in the 1930s and 1940s. Actually, industrial growth in some parts of Latin America dates to the interwar period.¹² The structuralist logic embraced in the NIDL perspective leads analysts to glide over

TABLE I
**Business environment
risk intelligence labour
force evaluation measure
(points scored in brackets)**

Country	1993 position	1992 position
Singapore	1(78)	1(79)
Switzerland	2(74)	2(75)
Japan	3(72)	3(73)
Belgium	4(71)	4(71)
Taiwan	5(68)	5(69)
Germany	6(65)	6(66)
Netherlands	6(65)	7(65)
United States	6(65)	8(64)
France	9(63)	10(61)
Norway	10(62)	9(62)

Source: Singapore Economic Development Board, *Singapore Investment News*, May 1993, p 8.

historically specific conditions prevailing in individual countries, regions, industries, and sectors that form a pattern of incorporation into a global mosaic.

Moving beyond economism, the key questions are, what conditions in respective zones of the world economy are propitious for entry into this division of labour, and *on what and whose terms?* In other words, what are the political dynamics that both join and separate global linkages in production, exchange and consumption?

The global division of labour

Regionalism and globalism

What is new about the contemporary period is the manner of and extent to which domestic political economies are penetrated by global phenomena. There is no single wave of globalisation washing over or flattening diverse divisions of labour both in regions and industrial branches.¹³ Varied regional divisions of labour are emerging, tethered in different ways to global structures, each one engaged in unequal transactions with world centres of production and finance and presented with distinctive development possibilities. Within each region, sub-global hierarchies have formed, with poles of economic growth, managerial and technological centres, and security systems.

It would be fruitless to seek to define a single pattern of regional integration, especially a Eurocentric model emphasising legal principles, formal declarations, routinised bureaucracies, and institutionalised exchange. This would be an inadequate guide for infrastructural and production-based orientations—to some extent a reality, and certainly a goal among the members of the Association of

South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Southern African Development Community. Regional divisions of labour are of course not static but change rapidly, reflecting expansion and contraction in production in different locales, the instantaneous movement of finance, the coalescence of production and trade networks, as well as the consolidation of production and distribution systems.

Though a diminished actor relative to global forces, the state facilitates the reorganisation of production, and the interstate system remains an important point of reference in an integrated world society. With proper timing during a period when the world economy was robust, state interventions promoted remarkable economic growth in East Asia's newly industrialising economies (NIEs)—Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan—marked to varying degrees by fragmented and weak indigenous classes which have allowed the military and bureaucracy to control state apparatuses.¹⁴ By such activities as coaxing foreign investors, ensuring ample quantities of scientific and engineering labour power, and offering a generous tax policy, the state in Singapore has played a key role in the country's 'free market' economy. To industrialise and attain upward mobility beginning with the IDI, and during the NIDI, as well as to manage the GDI, the state in East Asia has deliberately gotten the prices 'wrong' through incentives and subsidies to local business.¹⁵

To adjust to globalisation, some states have adopted an export-processing zone (EPZ) or a *maquiladora* (assembly plants as subsidiaries or subcontracting firms for the manufacture of exports) strategy for gaining access to external capital and creating jobs. An important aspect of neoliberal regionalism, this globalising trend is on the rise. Data collected by Jeffrey Hart indicate that by 1984, 79 EPZs were functioning in 35 countries;¹⁶ by 1989, the number of zones reached 200, employing more than 1.5 million workers, with another 100 EPZs being built. In 1990, Mexico alone operated 1938 *maquiladora* factories; 68% of the labour force were women—a reversal of the male:female ratio in nationwide manufacturing. As a consequence of the rapid and unregulated growth of these industries, environmental problems include congestion in border towns, unmet demand for such services as the supply of clean water, and the pollution of rivers. Nonetheless, zone-based strategies of managing globalisation are expanding, albeit differently in various regions.

The state has also taken a hand in reconfiguring labour processes, sometimes through repression, partly to keep down the cost of labour, and also, as in Japan, by encouragement of experimentation with the 'just-in-time' manufacturing system. Calling for synchronised and continual supplies to reduce storage and overhead costs, this method can reduce the size of the labour force otherwise required to maintain production levels. The leading economic power in the Asia Pacific region, Japan has exported its 'just-in-time' system to neighbouring countries, demonstrating that regional hierarchies can contour patterns of labour supply within various zones of the global economy and exercise transnational influence over the bargaining power of workers.

Regional hierarchies form patterns of inner globalisation and outer globalisation. Whereas globalisation constrains choice, narrowing the state's policy options and circumscribing responses from labour, the inner variant is inward looking and places greater emphasis on the regional market; the other

configuration's outward focus seeks to reap maximum benefit from the world market. Inner globalisation enhances interactions within a region and may divert transactions from without, but an open globalising policy may in fact limit regionalism. In Asia, there are attempts to employ both strategies and also to combine them.

Within the Asian regional division of labour (ARDL), a highly stratified hierarchy—Japan, China together with the other areas comprising 'Greater China' (Taiwan and Hong Kong–Macao), Korea, ASEAN and Indochina—varies by industry and sector. The economic growth generated by the Japanese-led 'flying geese' mode of regional integration, involving countries at quite different levels of development, suggests important distinctions among generations of countries which have penetrated global markets in diverse branches of industry.¹⁷

While the ARDL developed partly in response to different labour costs, today sub-regions play an important role as intermediaries between transnational corporations and the supply of cheap labour. Two 'global cities' in the ARDL, Singapore and Hong Kong, are regional hubs for concentrations of direct foreign investment. In an attempt to overcome limitations stemming from economies of scale, these regional centres have adopted a strategy of 'twinning', a type of coordination which is but one form of linkage.

Another blend of state initiative and private entrepreneurship is the concept of a 'growth triangle' comprised of three nodes: Johor in peninsular Malaysia, the Riau Islands of Indonesia and the city-state of Singapore. While Johor offers land and semi-skilled labour, Riau also has land and low-cost labour, and Singapore is distinguished by high quality human capital and a developed economic infrastructure. A propellant for economic growth, the growth triangle creates a wide manufacturing base with different factor endowments in each node and, thus, an incentive for transnational corporations to consider the region as a whole for investment. Introduced in 1990, there are signs that the triangle is attracting foreign investment and causing the migration of industries in search of specific factors of production. Problems associated with integration, however, include the potential widening of disparities in income and the emergence of a shanty economy on the fringes of industrial townships, especially with an inflow of workers of diverse ethnic backgrounds in Indonesia, and of young female workers to staff assembly operations. Moreover, the growth triangle seems to rest on two legs, Singapore–Johor and Singapore–Riau, without a viable third link between Johor and Riau, both providers of cheap labour and land. To the extent that Singapore suffers an industrial hollowing out, with an exodus of industrial investment exceeding the rate of entry, there will be an increasing need to replace an aging population with foreign workers.¹⁸

Given integrated, cross-border industrialisation, both labour markets and capital markets reflect regional momentum within the ambit of economic globalisation. In fact, the growth triangle shows signs of enlargement. The more ambitious concept of outer globalisation, known as a 'crescent of prosperity', is a sub-regional scheme for joint utilisation of resources. A bigger version of the growth triangle, the crescent would encompass Korea, Japan, China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar and the six ASEAN countries.¹⁹

With the emergence of integrated regional production and trade networks, a

triangular pattern entails industrial relocation from Japan and the NIES to ASEAN. The ASEAN countries import machinery, equipment, parts and supplies from the Asian home countries of foreign investors, using them to manufacture goods which are then exported to Western markets. Added to this triangular form of trade, other types of growth triangles are developing. Launched in 1992, a second sub-regional growth triangle within ASEAN links the Malaysian port-city and industrial centre of Penang (known as Silicon Island in light of its sizeable semiconductor manufacturing base) along with its peninsular hinterland in Malaysia, the city of Medan and north Sumatra in Indonesia, and southern Thailand up to the city of Phuket. Another triangle under consideration would comprise the southern Philippines, Sabah in Malaysia, and northeastern Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Maluku in Indonesia. Outside ASEAN, a triangle will join Yunnan, China, in a cross-border zone with parts of Laos and Vietnam. The formula in establishing these zones of inner globalisation is to utilise small-scale, decentralised negotiations among fewer parties committed to locally based and relatively informal arrangements, rather than to involve the cumbersome and time-consuming bureaucracies of full regional groupings.²⁰

In contrast to autarkic forms of regionalism in the 1930s, today there is considerable hostility to the formation of exclusionary trading blocs. Out of a commitment to liberal multilateralism, Japan is reluctant to support measures which bolster regional economic alliances and favours a policy of *de facto* economic integration with limited formalisation (as for example, with the East Asia Economic Caucus.) From a liberal perspective, multilateralism may be defined as an 'institutionalized form which coordinates relations among three or more states on the basis of "generalized" principles of conduct'.²¹ Even including scholars like Ruggie who reject an orthodox realist interpretation and give credence to an 'extranational realm',²² the prevailing paradigm in academic journals on international relations acknowledges yet fails to theorise the role of civil societies and new social movements in multilateralism. It is therefore of limited use in explaining the extent to which economic globalisation reinforces or undermines the neoliberal order. Quite clearly, globalisation suggests the need for global economic management, but existing international institutions were designed to coordinate a system of nation-states in which each state was supposed to be sovereign over its own domestic economy.²³ There is thus an inherent disjuncture between economic globalisation and international institutions, establishing the potential for a transformation of global governance.

An alternative concept of multilateralism stems both from the notion that, as the process of globalisation is now unfolding, no one can be held accountable for the direction of events in the world economy, and a normative preference for inclusiveness, or empowerment, of less privileged groups in the restructuring of global institutions. Transformative multilateralism therefore implies the articulation of non-state forces in the process of international organisation. In this sense, Robert Cox views multilateralism as 'a commitment to maximum participation in a dialogue among political, social, economic, and cultural forces as a means of resolving conflicts and designing institutional processes'.²⁴ An emancipatory project, this approach calls for a significant opening to popular movements during a period of global restructuring. As yet, however, there is insufficient

evidence to suggest that participatory channels are becoming both accessible to and genuinely representative of different elements in the global division of labour.

What appears to be emerging in the near term is truncated multilateralism: not a world of competitive trading blocs but of states locked into global regions in different ways, trying to optimise their positions, and encountering resistance from social groups and movements adversely affected by globalisation. Three regions—North America, the European Union (EU) and East and Southeast Asia—form ‘megamarkets’ as well as dominate global production and trade. They generate 77% of world exports and produce 62% of world manufacturing output.²⁵ One of the principal challenges to this and other concepts of multilateralism in recent years is massive displacement of labour, an aspect of global restructuring that accentuates differences between sending and receiving countries.

Inter-regional and intra-regional migration

With the simultaneous restructuring of global production and global power relations, the growth poles of competitive participation in the GDI are drawing large-scale and increasingly diverse imports of labour from their points of origin. Seeking to escape a marginalised existence and repression, population transfers within a stratified division of labour reflect a hierarchy among regions, countries and different rates of industrialisation.²⁶

While migratory flows are as old as history itself, the dimensions of the contemporary upsurge are staggering. The United Nations Population Fund estimates that there are at least 100 million international migrants living outside the countries in which they were born.²⁷ Their annual remittances to families at home amount to \$66 billion, more than all foreign development assistance from governments. By 1987 New York City alone had 2.6 million foreign-born residents, representing 35% of the city’s total population. The projection for the year 2000 is that immigrants (foreign born and second generation) will account for over 50% of the city’s population.²⁸ Europe is also one of the areas particularly vexed by numerous new ‘birds of passage’, including environmental refugees propelled by natural disasters, elements of North Africa’s middle strata fearing Islamic resurgence, and countless asylum seekers. According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 30% of Africa’s skilled workforce was living in Europe in 1987. It is also estimated that today, one out of 18 Africans resides outside his (her) country of origin.²⁹ Among European countries, Germany is host to the largest number of foreigners—5.2 million. Next is France with 3.6 million, followed by Britain with 1.8 million and Switzerland with 1.1 million, or 16.3 percent of that country’s population.³⁰

What is new about this influx of migrants is the direction of flows from sending to receiving countries as well as the spatial dispersion of growth poles, forming a distinctive territorial division of labour. The more dynamic economies act as magnets attracting mobile resources primarily from the South and the East to the West. The redistribution of labour within and across regions also includes migratory flows within the South, although a large portion of these transfers

becomes South to North movements. Many locales in the South or on the fringes of the North (eg southern Europe) are merely stopovers or way stations as the newly arrived leapfrog to their countries of destination.

Although market dynamics are the galvanising force in the extensive movement of peoples from their homelands to other areas of work and settlement, this propellant is not merely a by-product of a structural tension between capital and labour. To be sure, capital is forming large unregulated markets, and labour is less capable of transnational reorganisation. Capital is increasingly globalised, but trade unions still conceive their identities primarily in national terms. With calls for 'borderless solidarity' and for the eventual establishment of regional trade union structures,³¹ international solidarity is an ever-important motif, but the nation-state remains the key point of reference.

The salience of class thus lies in its integration with non-class categories. At issue are the interactions of production and the formation of multiple identities. Insofar as employers exercise vast control over the conditions of labour, identities are very largely constructed in the realm of leisure—ie in the community or household—where work experiences are given meaning. Often, activities such as sports, neighbourhood associations, or festivals provide the milieu for the formation of identities. In this sense, a changing global division of labour is situated at the crossroads of class and cultural differences.

At this juncture, the regulation of migrant labour is performed less by the state or formal multilateral processes than by informal monocultural and multicultural mechanisms. Liberal multilateralism may constrain immigration, yet the capacity for and record of inter-governmental coordination are quite limited. In Europe, for example, pressure is mounting for a common policy on immigration, but the EU lacks judicial authority in this area. Although the EU subscribes to the principle of free movement of persons, permanent immigration and the right to grant asylum are reserved for national governments.

The presence of distinct immigrant cultures has posed problems for the identity of a number of host countries. In France, the immigration issue became highly politicised in the 1960s and 1970s when it became evident that waves of labourers were of decidedly different origins from those of their predecessors. Not only did the duration of stay increase, but workers brought their families, settled and produced second-generation immigrants, many of whom do not conform to a national identity imagined as a unitary French culture impervious to race and ethnicity. In fact, new elements of the French population who maintain their own languages, religious traditions, dress codes and dietary practices encounter employment opportunities restricted to persons of indigenous culture or to those who have assimilated local culture.³² The case of immigration in France suggests that, as multiracial and multiethnic societies evolve, culture becomes an instrument in the regulation of labour.

So too, after 1945, Germans invented a myth of 'cultural cohesiveness' to replace 'racial cohesiveness' as a defining identity. This imagery was not problematic as long as the original guestworker system brought in a modest number of foreigners from southern Europe to provide cheap manual labour for the German economic miracle. The idea of 'Germanness'—ethnic and cultural homogeneity—is a myth that is widely embraced and one that cannot measure

up to the test of history. In fact, German culture is an accretion of polyglot European influences. For instance, many residents of the Ruhr area are directly descended from Poles who came to work in the mines in the 19th century.³³

Setting aside the question of genuineness of identity, a series of wildcat strikes among foreign workers in 1973 made it clear that Germany would have to invest substantially in housing and education for migrant workers and their families. A supposedly disposable labour reserve emerged as long-term residents. As the Swiss author and playwright Max Frisch said of the receiving countries, 'We asked for workers, but human beings came'.³⁴

A naturalisation programme would require a redefinition of German citizenship, which is inherited from one's parents (*ius sanguinis*) and is not based on a person's place of birth (*ius soli*). Hence, only children of at least one German parent are legally entitled to German citizenship. The sole exclusion from this rule are the descendants of ethnic Germans who settled in Eastern Europe in the 18th century, a group persecuted during and after World War II. Many new arrivals from the east have few or no ties to Germany, but are thus able to circumvent the stringent regulations applied to other immigrants, including guestworkers' children born in Germany. The maxim that 'Germany is not a country of immigration' means that some Germans even consider naturalised immigrants still to be Italians, Greeks or Turks. They may have resided in Germany for all their lives, may speak only German, but are nonetheless viewed as outsiders.³⁵

Notwithstanding a multicultural work force, monoculturalism remains the dominant identity among Germans. Thoroughgoing assimilation does not guarantee equal access to a job, but is a possible route to employment, for multiculturalism would require a reinvention of German identity.

What directly impinges on the lives of migrants is informalisation of the labour supply and the emergence of new linkages between North and South: smuggling networks and international gangs have become important conduits largely outside the reach of multilateral regimes. In the chains connecting the USA and Mexico, a 'coyote' escorts clandestine entrants across the border. Highly sophisticated, illegal systems of labour supply actively recruit potential migrants, some of whom slip into the USA while others remain in servitude in Mexico, often in brothels, where Central American women are forced to pay off the coyotes. Transnational criminal organisations also set up voyages from Fujian Province in southern China and Taiwan, with numerous stopovers, and deliver undocumented immigrants to New York and other US ports, where new arrivals are frequently greeted by hostility and hardship.

Working underground, especially if they do not speak the language of the receiving country or lack specialised skills illegal immigrants typically subsist in the informal economy—eg sweatshops, peddling, gypsy taxicabs and industrial homework. A burgeoning illegal market for low-cost labour provides entry-level jobs through family and communal networks. Meanwhile, in the smaller towns and villages of the sending countries, migration has had a profound impact. In a Polanyian sense, the extension of the labour market tears the social fabric and inserts new polarities between those who receive remittances and can now purchase a variety of consumer goods and those who do not

have such largesse. In countries with a large portion of the male population holding jobs overseas, a nationwide shortage of workers boosts salaries but also makes the lives of countless people more desperate and deprived. The separation of families, a generation of orphans, and the introduction of AIDS into rural areas by returning emigrants are but some of the tangible consequences of a changing division of labour. Enmeshed in a complex structure of dependence, migrant workers and their families are commodities like other commodities bought and sold on a global market, and are thus one part of a chain of commodification in modern capitalism.

Global commodity chains

Labour flows are integral links in global commodity chains,³⁶ serving as rough locators of position in geo-economic structures. As originally defined by Hopkins and Wallerstein,³⁷ a commodity chain is 'a network of labour and production processes whose end result is a finished commodity'. By tracing these chains, one can delimit the division of labour and the transformation of production systems. For each commodity, one focuses on different nodes from distribution to marketing, production and the supply of raw material. These chains not only join multiple production processes but also reflect the totality of production relations in an extended social division of labour.

Inasmuch as other authors have provided detailed case studies of the organisation and geography of commodity chains in a variety of industries (shipbuilding, garments, footwear, automobiles, etc), I will not rehearse their work here.³⁸ Empirical research shows the diverse ways in which the evolution of networks of complex industrial, commercial, and financial ties has created distinctive nodes that link raw material supply, manufacturing operations and trade flows into commodity chains in an increasingly integrated global economy. These chains cut across the geographic and political boundaries of nation-states, and are explained in part by social and cultural patterns.

Cultural formation

Transnational linkages are essentially stateless and held together not only by flows of commodities but also by marriage, clans and dialects—in short, a common culture. Indeed, the impact of culture is perhaps the most neglected factor in division of labour theory.³⁹ What is often overlooked is that class ties are formed by both impersonal economic forces and shared beliefs and values; lives are shaped and meanings are formed in distinctive cultural contexts. Hence, class is overlaid by ethnic, racial and gender divisions of labour. With the impetus towards globalisation, cultural responses to the expansion of the market provide intersubjective meanings and intermediate inequalities arising from a changing division of labour.

There are varied manifestations of regional and global networks in which culture and the division of labour are intertwined. A notable illustration is the Chinese transnational division of labour, a vitalising force in the remarkable rates of growth experienced by East Asian and Southeast Asian economies in

TABLE II
GDP comparisons for four economies: market price and standard international price estimates (trillions of US\$)

Country	At market prices		At standard international prices		Per capita income (US\$)
	1991	2002	1990 ^a	2002 ^b	
Chinese Economic Area	0.6	2.5	2.5	9.8	7 300
USA	5.5	9.9	5.4	9.7	36 000
Japan	3.4	7.0	2.1	4.9	37 900
Germany	1.7	3.4	1.3	3.1	39 100

^aThe source of these estimates is World Bank, *World Development Report 1992* (except Taiwan, China). Estimates vary widely, however. The International Comparison Program's (ICP's) estimate for China in 1990 may be conservative. For instance, the Summers and Heston ICP estimate for 1985 was US \$2.6 trillion for China alone (Summers and Heston 1988).

^b Per capita figures are in parentheses, expressed in thousands of US dollars. In making the ICP projections, it is simply assumed that GDP at ICP will increase at a similar percentage rate as GDP at market prices. This growth rate is an upper bound for the CEA because ICPs tend to rise more slowly than market prices at official exchange rates as relative income per capita rises (reflecting the higher relative price of services in high-income economies). Source: World Bank, *Global Economic Prospects and the Developing World*, 1993, p 67.

recent years. A powerful regional network—an informal though pervasive grouping—comprises the combined wealth of 40 million overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia, estimated at \$200 billion, the wealth of Hong Kong's seven million residents (another \$50 billion), Taiwan and the People's Republic of China.⁴⁰ Taiwan is now the world's 14th largest economy and commands the biggest accumulation of cash reserves—over \$80 billion—of any country in the world. What the World Bank refers to as the Chinese Economic Area (CEA or China, Hong Kong and Taiwan), also known as Greater China, has had an average growth rate of over 7% a year since 1962; by the year 2002 it will have a GDP ranking ahead of that of France, Italy and the UK and approaching the USA's output.⁴¹

Table II compares the CEA's economic size—the 'fourth growth pole' of the global economy—with that of other leading economies. With Chinese growth in GNP exceeding 15% in the first half of 1993, there are even fears that market reforms have generated a runaway train—an overheated economy that the state cannot cool without considerable political ferment.⁴²

The Chinese transnational division of labour originated with various waves of migration from the mainland to neighbouring territories and Southeast Asia. One of the important functions that Hong Kong served was to assemble Chinese emigrants for shipment to other areas as contract labourers. Singapore provided a trans-shipment point for most workers destined for Southeast Asia's plantations and tin mines. When the Chinese settlers had established themselves in receiving countries, they filled a vacuum in trade, marketing, commerce and service occupations. The indigenous populations had access to land but not to capital and growing international markets. Despite perceptions identifying ethnicity with particular types of economic activity (namely stereotypes of middlemen), the Chinese minority has established superior access to capital and credit

through family associations, dialect groups, clans and places of origin in China. Throughout Southeast Asia, Chinese big businesses have dominated the national economies, notwithstanding state assistance for indigenous entrepreneurs, and have constituted family firms traditionally controlled by one man or one family. Their formation and economic role reflect Chinese immigrant and minority status in receiving countries, for these groups and associations in China exist mainly for rural-urban migrants in commercial centres.⁴³

Once settled, ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia sent funds home through remittance brokers. Typically, brokers aggregated these monies and transferred them through Singapore and Hong Kong, which had the sole free-exchange market for remittances after World War II. Those in the remittance business diversified their holdings, using the funds they had collected to purchase goods for export to China and channelling the proceeds from sales to pay off the remittances.⁴⁴ Clan and especially linguistic ties provided the channels for funnelling the funds, with capital moving through the network in circuitous ways.

Major changes in the circuits of capital reflect structural shifts in the economies of Asia related to the relative decline of entrepôt trade and the rise of domestic manufacturing. The drop in entrepôt trade led to a reduction in the activities of import-export agents acting as middlemen between the mainland and Southeast Asia. There followed the development of international financial centres in Hong Kong and Singapore, which have become conduits of funds for foreign investment as well as sources of capital for other Third World countries. In Southeast Asia and Hong Kong, ethnic Chinese own and manage many banks as well as their foreign subsidiaries in Japan, the USA and elsewhere. Flush with refugee capital and short-term funds parked for placement, these banks are able to perform vital services for their Chinese customers and have made them attractive partners for financial and trading institutions in the USA, Japan and Europe.⁴⁵

Faced with the political challenge of economic nationalism by local ruling classes, large-scale Chinese traders dispersed control of their firms among relatives, trusts and shell companies in such locales as Panama, Vanuatu and Liberia. There emerged a labyrinthine complexity of family interests and numerous cross-shareholdings.⁴⁶ Chinese tycoons, as they are known, have also established myriad joint ventures with foreign interests, many of them ethnic Chinese in other countries. The business ties of the Kuok family, for example, emanate from the group's offices incorporated in Singapore and Hong Kong, to all of Southeast Asia, Fiji, China and Australia.⁴⁷ Another strategy for repelling the challenge of economic nationalism is to form alliances with non-Chinese capital in ways acceptable to local power brokers. Thus, a new generation of Chinese business leaders has sought political patronage in countries such as Malaysia, while maintaining communal business ties at home. The new breed identifies closely with the interests and needs of the Malay capitalist class and the imperatives of a Malay-dominated state. The two-pronged strategy of building ties to Malaysian and non-Malaysian capital is based on a realisation that political alliances are crucial to capital accumulation but also that the patrons of Chinese clients can be submerged by changing political currents.⁴⁸

Similarly, in Indonesia, following a number of anti-Sinitic riots, Chinese businessmen have sought protection from the authorities and have aligned their economic fortunes with those of the local ruling class.⁴⁹ To reduce their risks as a politically vulnerable minority at home, many overseas Chinese families are also remitting investment capital to their provinces of origin in the 'motherland' not only for sentimental reasons but also because of economic performance there.

As noted, evidence suggests that the Chinese transnational division of labour is emerging as an epicentre for economic growth in Asia. Greater China is a sub-regional triangle whose axes are the economic links that informally join the southern Chinese provinces of Guangdong and Fujian with Hong Kong and Taiwan. Asia's newest and most dynamic economic force, this triangle of 120 million people has a combined GDP of almost \$400 billion.

The Greater China triangle emerged during the 1980s when Hong Kong and Taiwan, bolstered by investment from ethnic Chinese around the Pacific Rim, moved their manufacturing bases to the People's Republic in order to take advantage of cheap labour, low rent and an enormous potential market. Opening to external capital, Guangdong Province has integrated its economy with Hong Kong, many of whose residents or forbears emigrated from there and speak the regional dialect, Cantonese. In the provincial capital of Guangzhou, efforts are underway to establish contacts among the 20 million overseas Cantonese all over the world (almost 40% of an estimated 55 million Chinese outside the mainland). With 63 million people, Guangdong itself is more populous than any European country except Germany, and increasingly operates as a single entity with the six million people of Hong Kong, even before the latter officially becomes part of China in 1997. Guangdong also draws on the neighbouring provinces of Guangxi, Hunan and Sichuan for much of its labour supply, raw materials and markets. Urban areas in Guangdong attract large numbers of Chinese labourers looking for work and wages, which are low in comparison to the pay in Hong Kong and Taiwan but exceed those on state farms and state-run factories.⁵⁰

In one of Guangdong's consumer electronics factories, for example, the average take-home pay of its 4000 workers is 4000 yuan per month, about \$72 or twice the average pay of a worker in a state-run factory. Producing remote-control toy cars for Hasbro, telephones for Radio Shack and hair dryers for Conair, this factory is one of the 30 000 enterprises in Guangdong managed by Hong Kong businessmen; together, these firms employ nearly four million workers. The factory noted above is part of the Grande Group—a microcosm of the Greater China triangle. Most of the production is on the mainland; R&D is carried out in Taiwan; and its managers and corporate headquarters are based in Hong Kong.⁵¹

In a classic Polanyian pattern, the expansion of the market is a disruptive and polarising force in China—a country of 1.15 billion people, with the world's largest surplus labour pool and without an effective framework for regulating mass migration to booming micro-regions along the coast. With direct foreign investment concentrated in the coastal region, socioeconomic differences with the vast interior are widening. From 1981 to 1988, the gap between gross industrial output in the coastal provinces and the nine western provinces grew

2.7 times. Young women from all over China flock to the south to work in female-intensive industries such as prostitution; some become mistresses to foreign entrepreneurs or local millionaires, easily identified by their fancy luxury cars and associations with thugs crossing the border into Hong Kong. Income inequality, criminal activities, environmental degradation, the incidence of venereal disease and fear of AIDS are on the rise. In southern China there is nonetheless a long tradition of redressing grievances, peasant unrest and rebellion when disparities grow too far out of line with what is politically tolerable. Approaching the second phase of a Polanyian double movement, an evolving and countervailing source of power represents a potential challenge to Beijing.

While Guangdong attracts migrants, Taiwan faces serious labour shortages and greater worker militancy, which prompts national capital to invest more rapidly in the People's Republic, and following Singapore, to import foreign workers. Transcending the micro-region and sub-region, further extension of Chinese-owned or controlled multinationals includes syndication and cooperation in joint ventures with Western and Japanese capital. While clan and especially linguistic ties continue to reinforce business interests among ethnic Chinese, traditional family linkages are increasingly integrated with professional management practices. Generational divergence within the Chinese networks has challenged the customary, intuitive style of the aging patriarchs. Modern English-speaking, MBA-toting managers, many of them financial technocrats, reflect the tenets of liberal-economic globalisation transmitted by business and law schools not in their ancestral villages but in Western countries where they now invest, trade and borrow.

Clearly, Chinese culture mediates the institutional arrangements in the regional and global divisions of labour. Broadly speaking, it is an adaptive, flexible and dynamic culture. It is responsive to market forces, the requirements for business success, necessary interactions with the local population and transnational opportunities. It is also employed selectively as a business strategy where it is advantageous to demonstrate minority characteristics to mobilise an investable surplus and engage in trade. But the use of cultural identity is not limited to the minority community. For the general population, intersubjective meanings attached to the interactions between culture and economic activities supersede or mask their objective significance, promoting conflicts within the ethnic and racial divisions of labour—to a large extent, a transnational phenomenon in East and Southeast Asia—and leading to state policies which only contradict stated government goals and accentuate societal tensions.⁵²

Conclusion

Division of labour theories are a valuable tool for examining global restructuring, especially because they identify major trends that constitute the changing social geography of capitalism. However, classical theory and its neo-variant are economistic, underrate the role of culture, and fail to allow for the possible reversal or interruption of contemporary restructuring; these interpretations do not offer a theory of transformation. The future is not best understood as more

of the present—straight-line projections—for change in a post-Cold War and post-hegemonic world is a spasmodic process.

Neither the economism of division of labour theory nor the political primacy argument engrained in realist and neo-realist approaches to liberal multilateralism are an accurate guide to an emerging world order. The problem with primacy arguments is that they presuppose a separation between an interstate system grounded in a territorial division among sovereign powers and an economic arena in which divisions are mediated by the market. By delimiting politics and economics as separate spheres, the dominant conceptualisation of globalisation rooted in liberal economic theory serves the interests of the beneficiaries of an expanded market. The challenge is to provide an alternative to the terms of reference employed by the enthusiasts of economic globalisation.

From another perspective, globalisation does not sideline the state but, rather, forces it to accommodate domestic policies to the pressures generated by transnational capital. State initiatives represent attempts to manoeuvre and achieve national mobility within the GDL, often by seeking to build productive capacity and to gain a technological edge. In the fastest growing regional economy—Southeast Asia, which overtook the East Asian NIES in the late 1980s—state policies are adopted to establish centres of innovative R&D so as to move towards higher value-added activities.

Nevertheless, the state is outflanked by transnational forces, for it aggregates the energies and synergies of human activity at a political and territorial level that does not correspond to evolving flows of labour, capital and technology. Links are increasingly developing between region-states and the global economy. Formed by parts of states, as in 'the third Italy' and Baden-Württemberg, or by economic patterns that overlap state boundaries, such as in the cross-border zone radiating across the Straits of Malacca and joining parts of Laos, Vietnam and Thailand, region-states hook into and seek to derive advantage from market expansion in a global division of labour.⁵³ In this configuration, the seeds of conflict are planted by leaders who contest the reality of globalisation and either try to fan the flames of economic nationalism or build competitive trading blocs.⁵⁴ Another response is to accept the brute fact that no country can escape the effects of globalisation. If so, it is necessary to define interests in terms other than the imagined "nation" and avoid merely defensive strategies. Global regions may then seek to navigate the currents and ride the tide of market expansion in a global division of labour.⁵⁵

These patterns suggest that the GDL reinforces and transforms the NIDL; the emerging structure is an articulation of the GDL, distinctive regional divisions of labour, and the texture of local conditions. The key elements in this structure are embedded in the globalisation process, understood here as a shrinking of the time-space aspects of social relations. Beyond an appreciation of a realignment in the role of the state and technological innovation, explaining the GDL requires attention to (1) evolving regional formations in their institutional and informal aspects; (2) intra-regional and inter-regional migratory flows; (3) the complex web of interlinkages among global producers, their outputs and specified markets; and (4) the ways in which cultures are historically constructed, emerge from and help to shape the economy of a region.

The region provides the starting point for analysing a changing GDL, for it is the site of distinctive divisions of labour and a major arena for large-scale transfers of population. Competition and the fear of extinction drove firms and enterprises to expand and produce on a scale wider than a national market. With technological innovations, the transnational mobility of capital, and space-shrinking advances in transport and communications, a new and more intensive phase of accumulation has integrated production processes, linking the nodes in commodity chains. Manufacturing activities forming classic production sequences—with the outputs of one being the inputs for another, while also interrelated to other components of the global economy (finance, trade and marketing)—have deepened the accumulation process. Lubricating commodity chains so as to facilitate flows of capital and labour, culture eases the tensions generated by the GDL.

As the global economy changes, the role of each region varies. Quite clearly, globalisation is an uneven process forming what Durkheim might have termed supra-organic solidarity. At the world level, there are multiple structures of specialisation binding and yet acting as spacers among zones of the global economy. Given the disparities between global regions and marginalised regions, there are different globalisation narratives. While the former are riding the waves of globalisation, the latter are driven by its currents and have lost control. No longer socially embedded in a national political economy, market forces are increasingly unaccountable and disembedded, less dependent on the social structures that gave rise to them. To the extent that modern society is dominated by economic relationships, the challenge is to identify and enlist the agents of social change for re-embedding the unprecedented productive capacities of economic globalisation in the interstices of world society.

Although Polanyi conceived market expansion as a global phenomenon, he also believed that regionalism offers an alternative to the universalist attempt 'to make the world safe for the gold standard'.⁵⁶ Contrary to a universalist conception of capitalism, based on the principles of liberal economy, the regional characteristics of globalisation suggest another strategy for market-ridden societies. Not a panacea, regionalism may be a remedy for the byproducts of the utopian conception of the market. Within the mega-structure of globalisation, the adoption of new regional instruments for managing large-scale flows of labour, economic non-cooperation, and intolerant nationalism may be a way towards achieving social justice. Moving beyond market-determined, private-sector-led forms of integration, regionalisation programmes can be developed to curb the anti-social tendencies of transnational capital. Corporate and statist regionalisation strategies should not go uncontested. While the enthusiasts of economic globalisation-cum-regionalization will defend social privilege, regionalism also provides space for fresh forces to spring up, align, and look more to a future of post-globalisation.

At the end of the day, does this emancipatory possibility constitute anything other than a utopian vision? Unlike the embedded world economy of the 1930s—the raw material of Polanyi's analysis—the contemporary form of disembedded globalisation defies his attempt to subsume economics under sociology. Economic globalisation congeals the material power of capitalism on

a world scale. The asymmetry between capital and labour will not be resolved by the imminent unity of a global working class. Not only is the bourgeoisie of the world uniting more rapidly and more effectively than is the proletariat, labour is also predominantly particularistic and local. Working class identity is not primordial, but one of several mobile identities deriving from the economic, racial, ethnic and sexual divisions of labour. Forging a political culture of resistance—a counterhegemony—draws on the salience of class and requires a reinvention of the interactions between production and identity.

Notes

This article is part of a larger project, the 'Programme on Multilateralism and the United Nations System', sponsored by the United Nations University (UNU) and directed by Robert W Cox. It is a substantially revised version of a paper jointly presented to the Symposium on 'Work, class and culture' organised by the History Workshop and Sociology of Work Unit, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 28–30 June 1993, and the UNU Symposium on 'Global political economy and a new multilateralism' in Oslo, 15–17 August 1993. The World Society Foundation and the Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York supported my research, including field work in Southeast Asia. I gratefully acknowledge these sources of funds, and appreciate the research assistance of Carolyn Storing Cohen as well as the materials generously provided by Christine Chin. I also owe a debt of gratitude to Edmé Domínguez and Stephen Gill for thoroughgoing and helpful comments on a preliminary draft of this paper.

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² For an elaboration of this argument see James H Mittelman, 'Global restructuring of production and migration', in Yoshikazu Sakamoto (ed.), *Global Transformation: Challenges to the State System*, pp 276–298, Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 1994; and Mittelman, 'The globalization of social conflict', in Volker Bornschier & Peter Lengyel (eds), *World Society Studies*, Vol 3: *Conflicts and New Departures in World Society*, pp 317–337, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1994.

³ For provocative ideas on the nexus between production and identity, I am indebted to the collective discussion at the Symposium on 'Work, class and culture' hosted by the University of the Witwatersrand's History Workshop and the Sociology of Work Unit, Johannesburg, 28–30 June 1993. Particularly valuable from the standpoint of the text that follows is the examination of the dilemmas of a 'shift from the political culture of resistance to one of reconstruction, from social movement unionism to strategic unionism' in a paper on 'South Africa's industrialisation: the challenge facing labor' by A Joffe, J Maller & E C Webster.

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- ³⁵ Wettern, 'The place of guestworkers in the German political economy'.
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Economism and critical silences in development studies: a theoretical critique of neoliberalism

JOHN BROHMAN

Because of the recentness of neoliberalism's rise in popularity within development studies, it has only been in the last few years that it has been subject to close scrutiny in the development literature. Moreover, much of the criticism of the neoliberal approach has been focused on the immediate consequences of structural adjustment and other neoliberal policy instruments on Third World countries. However, there is also a theoretical critique that can be applied to neoliberalism which can help explain the root causes of many of its shortcomings as a development strategy. Given the close links between neoliberalism and neoclassical theory in general, much of this theoretical criticism concentrates on basic problems of the neoclassical framework. This paper particularly focuses on the problem of economism and the consequent neglect of three important areas of development studies: sociocultural and political relations, the intersubjective realm of meanings and values in development, and the environment and issues of sustainability.

The narrowness of homo economicus and associated neoclassical assumptions

The multifaceted and dynamic nature of development processes makes it necessary to take an interdisciplinary approach to the study of development, one that includes sociocultural, political, and environmental factors as well as those economic. However, neoliberalism and other mainstream development frameworks that draw their conceptual roots from neoclassical theory have virtually omitted non-economic factors of development from serious consideration.¹ As Hirschman notes, 'The discipline became professionally more narrow at precisely the moment when the problem [of development] demanded broader, more political, and social insights'.²

Characteristically, neoclassical theory treats people as atomistic individuals who are bound together only through market forces. People are reduced to isolated creatures of the marketplace, devoid of history, cultural traditions, political opinions and social relationships beyond simple market exchanges.³ The conventional assumption is that non-market relations and institutions—the broader environments within which economies operate—are universal, unchanging, and have no significant impact on economic activities.⁴ Economies take on an ahistorical, static nature and economic change becomes solely the result of exogenous changes in tastes and technology.⁵ Stripped of their social relations

and historical dynamism, economies are reduced to simple technical devices for allocating scarce resources. The consequences are often unrealistic and trivial results derived from narrow, simplistic analyses that ignore the complexities surrounding Third World economic realities.

The gap between theory and reality within neoclassical economics is largely rooted in a series of unrealistic assumptions, especially those linked to the *homo economicus* postulate. The concept of *homo economicus* first emerged with the birth of marginalist or neoclassical economics, as it became known, around 1870. From its origins, neoclassical theory has basically conceived of a world composed of scarce means and unlimited desires, within which individuals must make choices. The role of *homo economicus* within this world becomes one of defining the 'best' choices, ie those that maximise an individual's ends given the limited means available. *Homo economicus* performs this function as a 'rational, self-interested, instrumental maximizer with fixed preferences'.⁶ Social processes are reduced to a universal psychological end—utility—which supposedly motivates all economically rational behaviour.

Homo economicus, then, represents yet another universalistic Western concept: economic behaviour in all places at all times follows the strictures of economic rationality. This universal rule of economic rationality determines which choices are best (ie which maximise utility) in all situations. Barnes notes that *homo economicus* provides neoclassical theory with a methodological agenda 'based upon reducing the complexity of economic events at any time or place to the universal trait of rational choice making: a trait that, because of its determinist nature, is easily represented in a formal model'.⁷ In the end, such reductionism means that *homo economicus* exists neither in the real world of the South nor the North. The real world is instead composed of individuals and social groups whose behaviour may change across time and space according to complex interconnections between individual attitudes, beliefs and motivations, on the one hand, and the influence of historically constituted societal structures and relations, on the other.

Ultimately, what neoclassical theorists have to understand is that there is no independent, universal sphere of economic rationality that is explicable by equilibrium equations and formal models based on assumptions of individualistic exchange relations. By precluding attention to elements of human behaviour that do not fit its narrow definition of economic rationality, neoclassical theory leaves itself no mechanism for understanding and explaining the often messy empirical world that so defies its models. Moreover, even rational behaviour (eg the pursuit of profits) cannot be understood without paying attention to non-market values, rules, relations and institutions. Development is not simply economic growth, but also involves critical changes in social relations and institutions. Changes in practices spring from mutual actions and relations among classes and social groups; they cannot simply be understood as aggregations of isolated individual actions, as is posited by neoclassical theory.⁸

Inevitably, neoclassical theorists pay a heavy price for the simplicity and elegance of their models: empirical ignorance, a misunderstanding of socioeconomic processes, and, as a result, the advocacy of unrealistic and bizarre policy recommendations.⁹ In order to explain how actual economic activities unfold in

their real-world settings, we must understand the local historical and geographical context in which these activities take place. This means moving away from universal models based on absolutes, such as the *homo economicus* assumption, towards the adoption of a more relativist stance. A central tenet of relativism is that human activities cannot be explained by recourse to theoretical absolutes, but need to be examined within their particular contexts. This position is especially relevant to the study of development processes in Third World countries that normally unfold in contexts that bear only a superficial and often misleading resemblance to their First World counterparts.

Neglect of factors differentiating markets

Because their development strategies are based on market-led growth, neoliberals and other neoclassical theorists especially need to develop a better understanding of the different ways that markets work in developing countries and the factors that contribute to these differences. It is normally assumed that markets are essentially similar and that reactions to market signals by the private sector will be equivalent from country to country. Indeed, the overall dependence of market-led growth strategies on the 'trickle-down' mechanism assumes a basic uniformity in Third World markets based on open competition and economically rational behaviour by entrepreneurs. However, these universal assumptions about markets and the private sector have little historical evidence to support them. Such assumptions appear to be particularly unrealistic for more underdeveloped economies marked by dualistic structures in poorer, predominately rural areas of the South (eg much of Africa, South Asia). As Stewart comments: 'Traditional elements in the economy have different organisation, operate in different labour and capital markets, pay different prices for these resources, and have quite different access to technology, from firms operating in the modern sector.'¹⁰ In the case of Africa, for example, Havnevik states that 'it is wrong to think that [Western-style] land, labour, credit, and product markets exist naturally ... Factor, product, and financial markets [have been] historically rare in Africa'.¹¹ It follows that if development in these areas is to conform to neoclassical prescriptions for market-led growth in the Western image, new market institutions will somehow need to be created and sustained in an environment likely to be rather inhospitable.

The general effectiveness of neoclassical trickle-down strategies also presupposes the presence of a capitalist class that is able and willing to respond to market incentives with investments and other accumulation activities. However, class differences between countries may profoundly affect investment patterns and other key elements of the accumulation process. Within developing economies, domestic capitalist firms often play a relatively small role in comparison to state-owned and family enterprises, both of which normally make production decisions based on criteria that diverge from neoclassical assumptions of profit maximisation.¹² Moreover, particularly in Africa and Latin America, domestic capitals have generally remained quite weak, while innovative entrepreneurs with significant investment capacities have yet to emerge in most countries.¹³ Under these circumstances, market incentives may be largely ineffective in

stimulating the investment capital needed to create added employment and income. This means that if the trickle-down strategy is not to be short-circuited by insufficient investment, capital will need to originate from abroad—an especially dubious proposition for exactly those more underdeveloped countries which most often lack a domestic capitalist class.

The trickle-down process is further restricted in much of the South by tendencies toward monopolisation in key economic sectors.¹⁴ In many countries, economic monopolisation has been associated with state protectionism of existing enterprises and resource constraints that prevent new firms from entering markets.¹⁵ Lack of competition, however, is not just a common trait of the South's domestic markets. The global food and commodity markets upon which many Third World exporters are especially dependent are typically dominated by a few transnational agribusinesses based in the USA and other industrialised countries.¹⁶ At either the national or international scale, then, the distributional impact of market-led growth cannot be specified *a priori*—as trickle-down theory attempts to do. Each country has its own historically evolving class and social structures and occupies a particular position in the international economic order, both of which will influence the strength of any trickle-down mechanisms. In fact, Booth comments that 'trickle-up' might be a more appropriate term to describe the distributional impact of development in the severely polarised agroexport economies of areas such as Central America and the Caribbean.¹⁷

The different ways that internal and external structures may affect market processes illustrate the fact that the market is at root a social process. Development, whether market led or not, is not a function of abstract economic mechanisms operating in a social vacuum, but necessarily also involves changes in social relations, structures and institutions. This is not to argue that the importance of economic growth to the South should be neglected, but that a broader, more balanced approach to development be taken that links the economic performance of regions and countries with the historical constitution of sociocultural and political structures. As Dietz and James note: '[Neoclassical] economic orthodoxy pays far too little attention to how powerful social and political forces can encapsulate and steer market forces'.¹⁸

Under-theorisation of the state, institutions and relations of power

The assumption of methodological individualism that produces the neoclassical world of atomistic individuals devoid of social relations is particularly ill-equipped to come to grips with the structured context within which relations of power arise. However, as Klein remarks, 'There is scarcely an assumption or an implication of conventional economic theory which is not altered when the realities of economic power are incorporated in the analysis'.¹⁹ While it is a truism that the market influences resource allocations in all capitalist systems, if we examine the structures out of which relations of supply and demand are created, powerful vested interests will inevitably be found that shape how markets operate.²⁰ Moreover, this pattern is undoubtedly most pronounced in many of the highly polarised and authoritarian societies of the South in which the vested interests of the elite monopolise state access to the exclusion of the

popular sectors. Little if anything meaningful can be understood about the effects that such power relations can produce on economic development (eg restrictions on market participation by some classes and social groups, limitations on aggregate demand rooted in societal polarisation) by using the neoclassical 'adding-up' approach of methodological individualism that neglects people's social and political make-up.

Along with its neglect of power relations, neoclassical theory has also afforded little attention to the institutional dimension of development. In recent years, an institutionalist critique has emerged of the one-dimensional, universalist logic of neoclassical theory that tends to equate state intervention with economic inefficiencies and predatory policies regardless of the historical, institutional and political context.²¹ It is noted that countries within the same geographic region often share institutional characteristics that distinguish them from countries in other regions.²² These institutional differences are, in turn, linked to underlying historical, sociocultural, and politico-ideological factors. Such factors mean that the feasible range of institutional change associated with development may differ widely; change that may generate benefits in one country, given its particular social make-up, may produce disastrous results in another. Onis comments, for example, that within the institutional and political context of East Asia, bureaucratic autonomy has been associated with extremely effective forms of state economic intervention. However, he also notes that it was not bureaucratic autonomy *per se* that produced effective state intervention, but rather a whole set of broader societal factors that collectively established the preconditions allowing for effective state action.²³ By contrast, similar types of state intervention might be quite counterproductive in other countries that lack such preconditions.

A basic inconsistency pervades the neoclassical and, by extension, neoliberal attitude towards state intervention. On the one hand, the Third World state is typically characterised as almost completely omnipotent in its ability to set policy according to its macroeconomic objectives. On the other hand, it is also described as virtually totally impotent and incapable of acting in an economically rational and efficient manner (unless, of course, it effectively follows neoclassical policy prescriptions). Contrary to this rather naive, monistic view of politics, however, the state is neither all-powerful nor completely powerless. In reality, both states and their polities are highly differentiated. Sources of state differentiation originate both from the internal composition of the state itself (eg bureaucratic structures, types of government) and from its broader social composition (eg relations with powerful classes, regional groups, familial and ethnic groups). As a result, states often have divergent technical capacities and other capabilities with which to carry out policy. Moreover, states are normally permeated by contrasting interests and tensions that may be reflected in diverse forms of economic intervention and other political behaviour. Economic as well as political actors struggle to make dominant those forms of intervention from which they and their allies will benefit most. Therefore, neither the structures nor the functions of the state should be seen as monolithic.

Both the internal and external structural features of the state, then, may affect its ability to devise and carry out different forms of economic intervention.

Given the tremendous structural diversity of Third World states and their societies, one would think that forms of state intervention ought to be correspondingly diverse. Indeed, a number of recent comparative political studies has emphasised the considerable variety that marks forms of state intervention in developing countries.²⁴ However, despite their focus on (reducing) state intervention, neoliberals have devoted remarkably little analysis to either the causes or consequences of different forms of such intervention. Characteristically, a simplistic univariable definition or indicator of state intervention is presented rather than any serious attempt to elaborate the different ways that states may intervene economically. This neglects analysis of the nature of the state and of its relations with the broader society, both of which are necessary to understand the nature of state interventions. In Africa, for example, Mengisteab and Logan find differences in forms of intervention according to the social composition of various states: policies in Mobutu's Zaire tended to conform to the elitist interests of the ruling class and state functionaries, while those in Nyerere's Tanzania or Mugabe's Zimbabwe were directed towards the redistributive interests of the poor majority.²⁵ Similarly, O'Donnell finds that particularities within both internal and external state relations have affected forms of state intervention in Latin America: before the mid-1980s, the neocorporatist or bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes of the Southern Cone carried out a mixture of coercive and neopopulist measures which reflected both their authoritarian political structures and the traditional strength of corporatist relations within the region's polities.²⁶

Disregard for culture and history

In the long run, the viability of any economic strategy depends on a host of historical, political and cultural variables. In order to be useful, a strategy must be able to adapt to historically changing conditions, while keeping interrelationships between economic and non-economic factors under constant and rigorous scrutiny. A growing number of development theorists—including some within economics itself—has reached the conclusion that neoclassical theory has overemphasised the technical analysis of abstract economic and scientific issues, to the neglect of other aspects of development that are based in real-world processes and are more immediately relevant to the well-being of the majority in the South.²⁷ Such criticism has touched off a rather vitriolic debate within development theory that is being waged both within and outside economics. On the one hand, some commentators (including a few economists) have charged that neoclassical theorists are too comfortable in their abstract world of universal assumptions and formal models to want to enter into the more messy and chaotic world of real social processes:

When you dig deep down, economists are scared to death of being sociologists. The one great thing [they] have going for [them] is the premise that individuals act rationally in trying to satisfy their preferences. That is an incredibly powerful tool because you can model it.²⁸

On the other hand, many neoclassical economists contend that the inclusion of

non-economic factors in explanations of economic growth and development will only detract from the scientific rigor and precision of their framework. As the following statement illustrates, some of the leading figures in the neoliberal counterrevolution have been particularly disdainful of research (especially by other economists) that seeks to establish the causal relevance of non-economic factors in processes of growth and development:

People delight in putting forward ex-post explanations, or rationalizations, for observed phenomena. Economists are no exception. Those who have failed to understand, nay foresee, actual developments because of faulty or inadequate economic reasoning fall back on noneconomic explanations, just as our ancestors thought to find the causes of lightning and thunder in the supernatural. Explaining intercountry differences in economic growth rates is no exception. With little knowledge, but fertile imagination, economists have wandered onto the fields of cultural and social phenomena when their models have failed them.²⁹

Problem of discipline-centrism and fragmentation

A common problem affecting economics, political science, psychology, sociology, and, to a lesser extent, other disciplines such as social anthropology and geography that are involved in development studies, has been the persistence of 'discipline-centrism'.³⁰ The development process is compartmentalised by each discipline to suit its own areas of specialisation, research methods, and theoretical frameworks. For the most part, interdisciplinary approaches to development have yet to attain intellectual respectability; development theorists commonly contend that interdisciplinarity tends to lead away from more important 'scientific' and 'rigorous' research within disciplinary specialisations. Instead of being constituted as a distinct area of intellectual enquiry because of its peculiar issues and problems, the field of development studies has become incorporated, in bits and pieces, into various disciplines. For example, economics (which in recent years seems to have got away with the biggest haul) tends to emphasise factors such as savings, capital, investment stimuli, and so on. By contrast, political science stresses equality, participation, responsive public officials and political accountability, while sociology highlights modernity, specialised roles and pluralism.³¹

The problem with this disciplinary segmentation is that development processes are inherently multifaceted—involving a complex web of sociocultural, political, economic and environmental factors. It follows that the traditional subject matter of any one discipline cannot adequately deal with the complexity of this topic. Yet 'purists' within particular disciplinary segments often limit their interaction with those in other branches who may have somewhat different concerns or may use unfamiliar research methods or theoretical discourses. The increasingly knotty, interwoven nature of development problems, however, demands new methods and insights that the traditional disciplinary orthodoxies have failed to provide. In order to be able to understand, explain and act effectively, development theorists and practitioners need to adopt more open, pluralistic perspectives that incorporate recent conceptual and methodological advances in a variety of disciplines, as well as indigenous insights into development from a range of

sources within the South itself. To do this, however, they need to eschew intellectual and disciplinary arrogance, escape the conceptual and methodological straight-jackets of the traditional disciplinary specialisations, and avoid the close-minded adherence to ideological convictions that has unfortunately come to characterise much of development studies.

Domination of positivist modes of enquiry

Despite the recent rise of post-positivist forms of explanation in most of the social sciences, the field of development studies still largely remains dominated by positivist modes of enquiry. Indeed, it might be argued that, with the rise of neoliberalism, mainstream development theory is probably more dominated by positivist methods today than at any time in the postwar era. This is in large part a result of the continuing domination of the positivist philosophy of science in a few of the central disciplines concerned with development studies, especially economics. As Wilber notes, it has only been quite recently that the positivist dominance of postwar economics has been challenged and, up to now, the development of alternative theoretical discourses has mostly taken place on the margins of the discipline.¹² Moreover, the influence of positivism within economics is particularly strong in many of the most prestigious universities of the North, particularly in the USA, that have advanced graduate programmes, major sources of funding and other resources needed to support development research on an ongoing basis. Many of the key actors in both the academic community and major development institutions—such as the IMF and World Bank—that are responsible for the rapid ascendancy of neoliberalism within development theory are connected to this select group of leading First World universities.¹³

An examination of the basic principles of positivism demonstrates its close connections with neoclassical economics and, by extension, mainstream development theory as practised at these leading universities. Among the important principles that define positivism as a distinct philosophy of science are: a belief in naturalism or the essential unity of all science under the 'scientific method' first developed in the natural sciences, an ontological focus on the empirical world of observable events and phenomena, the derivation of universal causal laws or generalisations based on empirical regularities, and the conviction that an objective world exists that can be accessed and explained by objective research methods. Like all positivists in the social sciences, neoclassical economists believe that any differences between research in the social and natural sciences are differences in degree rather than kind. No essential differences are thought to exist that would render the human-based subject matter of economics inappropriate for research methods developed in the natural sciences. If explanations in economics have yielded less predictable results than those in the natural sciences, this can be attributed to the relative immaturity of positivist models and techniques in economics—something that can eventually be overcome as more rigorous research progressively fills the gaps of knowledge.

As in the natural sciences, the ontology of neoclassical economics is basically composed of an empirical world of observable events and phenomena. Other

parts of reality that cannot be observed and measured (eg values, meanings, social relations) are considered to lie beyond the boundaries of proper science. It is from regularities or correlations among empirical facts that neoclassical economists derive causal laws or generalisations upon which explanations are based. Because these empirical facts are invested with a universality, questions concerning their social constitution and historical meaning are excluded from analysis. Causality flows out of simple relations between isolated empirical facts themselves, rather than from analysis of either their 'inner constitution' (ie their social composition according to class, gender, ethnic and other social relations) or the historically changing contexts within which they occur. The neoclassical world of these empirical facts is thought to be objective and to be explainable using objective research methods. This means that neoclassical research typically pays little attention to ideological biases and other non-objective factors that may influence the framing of research questions or the methods by which studies are carried out. Moreover, neoclassical research characteristically employs *a priori* models and theories that rule out subjective factors and separate the observer (researcher) from the observed (research subjects). As a result, neoclassical development studies tend to treat people as objects to be studied rather than as subjects of development in their own right, whose knowledge and interpretations of the world might contribute not only to the findings but also to the design of research projects.

A subjectivist critique: omission of values and meanings

At the core of much of the criticism of positivism within the social sciences is a concern for the human factor and for the subjective realm of values, meanings and interpretations. Many researchers who have adopted post-positivist positions (ie those based on one of the humanist approaches, realism, structurationism, postmodernism) have concluded that the postwar social sciences, in their anxiety of become more 'scientific' or 'objective', have adopted positivist methods that are inappropriate to the study of social subjects and that neglect many important issues related to methods of acquiring knowledge in the social sciences. Individuals and social groups are treated like atomistic facts or things that are devoid of any social content or meaning and follow universal laws which determine their behaviour. Historically constituted values and meanings, which may vary considerably over both time and space, are either excluded completely from analysis or are treated as simple universals in a way that denies their social construction.

Within neoclassical theory, for example, economic values are based on the universal concept of consumer sovereignty and are thus assumed to be stable and consistent. This denies possibilities for differentiation within the subjective realm of values, interpretations and meanings which might be based either on broad processes of social change or on individual variations among people's perceptions, aspirations and access to information and resources. In practice, the universalisation of values within neoclassical theory has systematically excluded the wishes and aspirations of dominated classes and social groups, particularly the poor, women, and minority ethnic groups. These silences underscore the fact

that neoclassical economics, like all discourses, is intersected by relations of power. Recognition of connections between power relations and particular forms of discourse (ie scientific paradigms) leads away from positivist notions of objectivity and the distinction between facts and values. Within development theory, it also highlights the need to examine the ways in which the neoclassical paradigm has furthered the power and influence of certain groups (ie those of global capital, core capitalist countries) at the expense of other needs and desires, particularly of the poor and disadvantaged in Third World countries.

In general, subjectivist critiques of the neoclassical framework in development studies emphasise the need to pay more attention to human complexities and to the dynamic, open-ended, and non-determined nature of social processes. Emphasis is placed on processes of social change, non-equilibrating tendencies, local diversity and human creativity. It is believed that efforts should be made to explore various subjective elements of development among different classes and social groups, alongside the usual studies of overt materialist behaviour and the more objective features of development. This involves attempts to 'bring the actors back' into development studies in the particular economic, political, and sociocultural contexts within which they operate. Research tries to interpret others' understanding of their world from their own special vantage points and without preconceived notions and conceptions. Contrary to neoclassical theory, it is neither assumed that the economic sphere is dominant nor that social processes conform to some sort of predetermined universal logic.

Moreover, advocates of alternative conceptions of development contend that a primary concern for 'humaneness', including social, ethical and moral considerations, should replace the abstract, technical focus that the science of economics has given to development theory.³⁴ Inevitably, this raises questions of purpose within development studies and brings issues such as social justice and environmental sustainability to the forefront. Accordingly, new questions and criteria are needed to assess development performance in diverse areas such as employment and equity, family life, individual freedom, cultural values, community welfare and ecological soundness. Questions that presently revolve around narrow concerns of 'How much economic growth?' in neoclassical theory are transformed into broader issues of 'Economic growth for what and for whom?'³⁵

Need for a hermeneutic component focused on development values and meanings

If development is about processes of human action and interaction rather than just about goods and resources, then it is clear that development theory must deepen its understanding of what it is to be human. This involves incorporating a hermeneutic component into development studies that addresses the ways in which mutual actions and social relations are linked with intersubjective values and meanings. A hermeneutic approach focuses on questions of discourse, meaning and interpretation. It contends that empirical facts are not objectively given and universal but are socially constructed within particular historical settings. Moreover, human practices are composed of modes of mutual action

and social relations which cannot be addressed by frameworks that treat them merely as aggregations of atomistic individual actions. A hermeneutic view of development would stress that one must understand the discourse, or the underlying configuration of interpretations and meanings, before one can understand social practices. Social practices which may on the surface appear to be similar may be interpreted quite differently and may take on distinct meanings for different groups of people.

The hermeneutic environment of social practices is profoundly historical rather than universal in nature. Neoclassical theory assumes a world composed of detached, rational agents who perceive their situations from a transcendent universal position. Optimal actions are supposedly calculated from disinterested observations that have no bearing on other (economic) agents. By contrast, hermeneutic agents are situated within a historically constituted social context. Rather than being detached and merely self-interested, they are embedded within a complex structure of social relations that requires them to make calculations or tradeoffs based on the perceived impact of their actions on others. This is particularly true for many Third World societies in which traditional values and meanings are so closely linked to local social structures (eg kinship, ethnic, community ties). Within these settings, individuals and social groups are both products and constitutive parts of the historically changing ensemble of economic, political and sociocultural processes that make up particular societies. Their practices both shape and are shaped by the distinct structures of value and meaning that constitute those societies.

Neglect of the environment and issues of sustainability

Issues related to environmental deterioration and the sustainability of development have only recently begun to receive attention in development studies.³⁶ Over the past decade, however, a growing number of authors has linked various types of environmental problems to mainstream strategies of development, especially those which focus on maximising economic growth through large-scale agricultural and industrial projects. Because the success of any long-term development project ultimately depends on the sustainability of the environment, there is increasing agreement that sustainability should be explicitly included as one of the central goals of development strategies.³⁷ This requires broadening the focus of development beyond simple considerations of economic growth; in many cases, it may also entail reconciling difficult tradeoffs between development objectives (eg between maximising economic growth and managing resources appropriately). In addition, it means that we must recognise that no one model of development can offer a universal solution for achieving environmental sustainability in all places at all times. Even the most elegant and internally coherent models that ignore variations in society-nature relations are doomed to failure because they neglect the different ways that social groups interact with their environment over time and space. Because of this, they have little chance of being appropriate to the diverse needs and desires of those that must implement them; they will therefore quickly be discarded by Third World countries as foreign and unworkable.

The environment and issues of sustainability have been largely ignored not only by mainstream development studies but also by neoclassical theory in general. When they are considered at all, natural resources are basically regarded as inputs for processes of production and consumption. In the same way as scarcities of other inputs (eg labour and capital) force choices, scarcities of natural resources force decisions over the ends to which they will be put. Given the different ends of various economic agents, natural resource use can be portrayed as an optimisation problem: 'environmental quality [or deterioration] is the result of the aggregated decisions of all individual economic agents, weighing the benefits derived from increasing production and consumption against the benefits enjoyed when the environmental quality is improved'.³⁸

The basic analytical framework of neoclassical theory was developed during the late 19th and early 20th centuries when the availability of natural resources was not generally regarded as an obstacle to economic growth. Perhaps this explains why the neoclassical approach contains so few categories and concepts suitable for analysing environmental problems, especially those occurring on a large and global scale.³⁹ Within neoclassical theory, environmental problems become simple negative externalities. As such, they represent effects on economic agents that are external to the central focus of the theory on the market itself.

Following the classic work of Hotelling, neoclassical theorists have especially tended to equate natural resources with other economic assets worth 'holding' in the present.⁴⁰ Certain material and energy-yielding natural resources are especially worth holding because of the threat of their future scarcity from continuing depletion. Therefore, policy ought to be set by locating an optimal rate of extraction or depletion for these economically valuable assets. For any particular resource, this will depend on its relative scarcity (ie its 'shadow' price) over time in comparison to other 'natural' or economic assets. Relative scarcity, in turn, depends on factors such as technological advance, possibilities for substitution, economies of scale, market imperfections, patterns of property rights and the 'renewability' of the resource.⁴¹ Moreover, the optimal rate of exploitation for a resource, just as for any other economic asset, should be most efficiently derived from the unhindered operation of market forces. Such neoclassical orthodoxy tends to produce an ahistorical, technical and quite optimistic view towards resource depletion and related environmental problems: 'There seems to be little reason to worry about the exhaustion of resources which the market already treats as economic goods'.⁴²

Given the prevalence of this viewpoint within mainstream economic theory, development studies has paid little attention until recently to concerns over environmental destruction and the sustainability of development. During the last decade, however, a growing number of development analysts, including many economists, has begun calling for a critical re-examination of the way in which natural resources and the environment have been treated in the theory and practice of development. On the one hand, this has been prompted by an increased awareness of the theoretical critique to which the neoclassical development framework has recently been subjected over issues of sustainability. This critique has especially been pioneered by groups of environmentalists, conserva-

tionists, and ecologists, as well as by some academic disciplines (eg geography, resource management, biology and other natural sciences) that are struggling to find a place alongside economics in development studies.⁴³ On the other hand, calls for an alternative framework have also been propelled by a growing realisation of the substantial and, in many cases, irreversible damage that has been inflicted on the environment as a practical consequence of neoclassically driven development projects.⁴⁴ As a result, many multilateral and bilateral development organisations have become critical of the negative impact that postwar development projects have often made on the environment.⁴⁵ The World Bank, for example, recently engaged in the following self-criticism:

... numerous public investments—often supported by development agencies, including the World Bank—have caused damage by failing to take environmental considerations into account or to judge the magnitude of the impacts. Indonesia's transmigration program, Sri Lanka's Mahaweli scheme, and Brazil's Polonoreste projects are examples of large programs that caused unanticipated damage in earlier years.⁴⁶

Principal problems with the neoclassical treatment of the environment

In the last few years, a multifaceted critique has emerged in the development literature over the way in which the neoclassical paradigm treats environmental questions and issues. This critique may be divided into the following eight problem areas. First, neoclassical theory assumes that values are created exclusively by the market, based on the individual preferences of economic agents. A problem arises over how to aggregate these individual preferences into a collective statement on the value of specific natural resources and other environmental factors. Attempts at aggregation meet with problems of cardinal measuring of utility and of interpersonal comparisons of utility, especially among different societies over time.⁴⁷ In many cases, the preferences of economic agents are either not known (particularly for future generations) or, at best, only partially known (among various social groups in different societies). But, unless individual preferences can be satisfactorily aggregated, it becomes impossible to weigh the value a society puts on the production and consumption of goods and services that damage the environment (eg through pollution or species extinction) *vis-à-vis* the value the society puts on environmental conservation.

Second, a related problem arises over how the environmental costs and benefits of development can be expressed as market prices in order to fit into neoclassical calculations. In most instances, the social costs of environmental damage can be measured. However, problems often arise in trying to determine the value of benefits, particularly the benefits of avoided environmental damage. This problem is illustrated by the following example:

... the costs of decreasing the pollution level of a river that contains heavy metals from the effluent of a firm along that river, equal the purification costs of the polluted river plus the costs of adapting the polluting production process. Problems arise when the benefits of a clean river have to be estimated. Some benefits can be expressed in market prices, such as the lower costs of producing drinking water and the higher proceeds from fishing. Many benefits, however, cannot be expressed in

market prices, simply because there are no markets for public goods like ecosystems and landscapes. What is, for example, the price of a square mile of wetlands?⁴⁸

Third, environmental concerns are normally excluded from standard income-accounting techniques, such as the measurement of growth by gross domestic product (GDP), based on market transactions. Measurements of GDP typically do not account for depreciation in the form of costs for maintenance of either physical capital stock or human capital stock.⁴⁹ Indeed, expenditures on inputs required to offset the effects of environmental depreciation are normally recorded as extra (gross) income. If environmental destruction (eg pollution, soil erosion, depletion of non-renewable resources) were to be fully accounted for by making appropriate deductions from GDP figures, measurements of development performance might be dramatically altered.⁵⁰ This would be particularly true for many recent industrialisers (eg Brazil, South Korea, Mexico and Thailand) that are facing escalating environmental costs in the form of physical damage and resource depletion, loss of amenities and rising health problems. Extensive remedial spending to correct such problems (eg public spending on relocation, cleaning up polluted areas, converting polluting processes) will affect future growth rates and will represent a negative counterbalance to past growth that omitted environmental depreciation. As the Malaysian Prime Minister recently admitted in Penang, 'We have been misled by the way we have been measuring growth'.⁵¹ This realisation has led several development analysts to call for the incorporation of environmental accounting into the System of National Accounts.⁵²

Fourth, neoclassical methods typically neglect issues of intergenerational gains and losses resulting from the impact of development on the environment. In particular, the choice of an appropriate discount rate raises important questions concerning the rights of future generations.⁵³ The neoclassical methodology assesses the value of contributions to future income (whether positive or negative) by discounting them to the present at an agreed interest rate, which represents the 'social rate of discount'. Although they should be crucial to all long-term development decision making, rates of discounting that would be appropriate for different times and places have yet to be devised. In practice, many development agencies simply declare the discount rate to be 10%. However, at a discount (interest) rate of 10%, the present value of a dollar's worth of costs incurred 30 years hence would be less than six cents.⁵⁴ Using this type of calculation, the question becomes, who will pay any attention to the long-term effects of present development practices? Risks of irrecoverable damage to environmental systems (eg from 'irreversibilities', 'threshold effects') are not factored into such calculations. Neither are the needs and desires of future generations, to whom considerable environmental costs are often being transferred. As the Brundtland Commission noted, the ethics of this intergenerational transfer of environmental costs are highly questionable:

{There may be} profits on the balance sheets of our generation, but our children will inherit the losses. We borrow environmental capital from future generations with no intention or prospect of repaying... We act as we do because we can get away with

it; future generations do not vote; they have no political or financial power, they cannot challenge our decisions.⁵⁵

Fifth, the way in which neoclassical theory treats environmental questions fails to consider the impact of imbalances of power within and among societies. This means that neoclassical methods neglect equity issues not only among generations, but also among current classes and social groups. Imbalances of power present dominant economic and political groups with opportunities to put their individual and short-term interests ahead of the collective and long-term interest of a sustainable social and physical environment. Neoclassical recommendations to internalise external 'diseconomies' disregard imbalances of power. It has been pointed out that forces in most societies with interests in such diseconomies are much more powerful than forces in favour of a sound environment.⁵⁶ Moreover, many poor and otherwise disadvantaged people may be virtually defenceless to prevent environmental damage resulting from pollution and other 'diseconomies' generated by others. Broad and Cavanaugh, for example, offer the example of poor families on Palawan Island in the Philippines who were powerless to stop the destruction of their traditional fishing grounds by environmentally unsound logging practices pursued by large corporations with close ties to the national government.⁵⁷

Sixth, both neoclassically driven development initiatives and environmental agendas are commonly imposed by the North on the South, a process that has gained momentum in recent years with the rise of neoliberal development strategies. It has long been recognised by dependency theorists and others that the origin of development initiatives in the North is key to understanding their social and environmental impacts on the South. Given that there is a 'low income elasticity of demand for environmental protection in developing countries and the opposite in developed countries',⁵⁸ many development analysts are becoming increasingly concerned over tendencies by transnational corporations to shift environmentally destructive operations to the South in order to lower costs and escape regulations. Potentially severe conflicts have also been noted between the liberalised trade regimes advocated by neoclassical theorists and the protection of global environmental standards.⁵⁹ The lack of proper regulations over the rapidly expanding global trade in highly toxic substances serves to underscore such concerns. Increasingly, not only major development initiatives but also the environmental agenda for the South is being directed by the North.⁶⁰ Rising concerns in the North over the global impact of environmental destruction in the South (eg from the destruction of tropical rainforests) has prompted international development organisations (including multilateral institutions, bilateral aid agencies and nongovernmental organisations) to take the lead in setting the environmental agenda for many Third World countries. Consequently, many analysts have begun to question whether the issues and the methods of this agenda will be appropriate for the South, particularly the interests of its poor.

Seventh, the neoclassical framework's focus on linear relations and equilibrium concepts is inappropriate for the analysis of many issues related to environmental sustainability. New developments in areas such as thermodynamics and catastrophe theory in a variety of disciplines have demonstrated that

ecological systems are prone to sudden changes that cannot be predicted by linear models or equilibrium concepts. Whereas traditional positivistic frameworks based on linear relationships maintain that small changes produce small effects in ecological processes, new ways of thinking that allow for nonlinear and chaotic behaviour within ecosystems point in the opposite direction. It is now commonly thought that the slightest perturbations in, for example, the climatic regime may throw a fragile ecosystem into disequilibrium—with potentially catastrophic and largely unpredictable results. Many processes in nature and, hence, human interventions in these processes appear to be hardly predictable for at least three reasons: the existence of synergetic effects that increase the combined impact on the environment of separate practices (eg industrial emissions), the presence of critical thresholds in most ecosystems and the fact that many practices have a delayed effect on the environment.⁶¹ This means that devastating and largely unpredictable long-term consequences may sometimes be produced by even small human-produced changes in an ecosystem, such as increases in atmospheric carbon dioxide resulting from deforestation or industrial pollution. At a minimum, these new insights should alert development strategists to the possibility that the ecosystems which sustain development are sensitive and fragile. Given the devastating implications of sudden environmental change, this requires that we incorporate new ways of thinking and new practices into development strategies that emphasise sustainability.

Eighth, neoclassical theory's treatment of the environment and natural resources as 'externalities' does not contribute to sustainable development strategies. Externalities are so termed because they are external to the market trading process upon which neoclassical theory focuses. Moreover, externalities, as the term implies, are normally viewed as 'peripheral, expendable, or of very low priority' relative to the exigencies of economic growth within neoclassical models.⁶² However, from a sustainable development perspective such externalities are integral and fundamental to ecological processes upon which all development is based. Rather than being relegated to the margins of development strategies, a concern for externalities ought to be put at the centre of development theories and practices. Externalities may arise from a variety of sources to which solutions may be applied. For example, current property rights in most countries provide little incentive to protect the environment. Institutional failures and development projects narrowly conceived to maximise economic output have also frequently contributed to increasing externalities. Proponents of sustainable development contend that, in the broadest sense, externalities represent the complex web of interrelationships between human and natural systems upon which overall systemic balance and well-being depends. Because of this, attention to the production of externalities ought to assume greater conceptual and practical importance in development strategies, rather than being treated peripherally as an afterthought or add-on.

New issues and alternative directions for sustainable development

The escalating costs of externalities produced by current development practices, many of which have yet to be explored, have provided the focus for a growing

number of studies employing a variety of sustainable development perspectives.⁶³ Some of these studies emphasise the high 'opportunity costs' associated with irreversible environmental damage that may foreclose future options for using certain areas. Other studies have highlighted the neglect by neoclassical theory of the essential 'utility-yielding' role of ecosystems and their environmental functions. And a third group of studies has broadened the discussion to issues of 'coevolutionary development,' or interrelationships between social and ecological systems in which feedback mechanisms that previously maintained ecosystems have been progressively shifted to the social system. Many of these studies of sustainable development challenge neoclassical theory to re-examine a series of environmental and distributive questions that have largely been neglected. It is argued that development is not well measured by focusing on economic growth alone. Instead, attention should be given to issues such as redistributive justice and egalitarian ethics, human capital development, protection of the environment and species survival, and the diverse interests and desires of traditionally excluded groups such as minorities and indigenous peoples.⁶⁴ Strategies that may generate high growth but also produce widespread alienation and distributional disparities in areas such as income, health, education and employment ought to be avoided, particularly in already polarised Third World countries. Likewise, growth-orientated strategies that generate unacceptable levels of environmental destruction should be abandoned in favour of alternative approaches that address the need for ecosystem maintenance and the preservation of biodiversity.

In many cases, this will require the imposition of specific standards and regulations by local communities, national governments, international bodies and other authorities to ensure that development practices are sustainable from a social and ecological point of view. These standards should be derived from scientific knowledge of the functioning of ecosystems, as well as ethical views concerning the current and inter-generational distribution of resources (ie the quantity and quality of natural resources that are available to different classes and social groups within and among countries, both currently and for future generations). Both 'command and control' and economic instruments may be used to ensure that development practices conform to ecological standards and social goals. The choice between types of instruments will depend on the conditions prevailing in particular countries and should be measured by the usual criteria, such as effectiveness and efficiency. However, given the destructive legacy of past development practices in most Third World countries, as well as the many theoretical shortcomings of the neoclassical model, it should be emphasised that sustainable development cannot be fostered by depending on market-driven development programmes or theoretical frameworks. The development literature is full of examples of how the exposure of Third World peoples to the full rigors of the price system has produced both economic misery and environmental destruction. In most cases, it appears that goals of social equity and environmental sustainability would have been better served by creating democratic institutions at various scales to facilitate popular participation in environmental decision making. This would force development to

conform to environmental standards and social goals that, at best, can only be partially attained by adhering to neoclassical market-led principles.

Conclusion

Over the past decade, neoliberalism has experienced a meteoric rise in popularity, moving from the margins to the centre of mainstream development studies. It has only been in the last several years, therefore, that analysts have been able to subject the neoliberal framework to close scrutiny. Much of the criticism that has subsequently been levelled at neoliberalism has been directed at the disappointing results that neoliberal development strategies have produced in many Third World countries. However, given the close association of neoliberalism with orthodox neoclassical theory, there is also a theoretical critique which can be applied to this development approach. A central component of this critique is the tendency of neoclassical theory to slide into a narrow type of economism which denies conceptual space for sociocultural and political relations. This is the principal cause of the yawning gap that has appeared between development theory, as it is postulated by the neoliberal approach, and the realities of development in various Third World countries. It is also closely connected to the neoliberal framework's neglect of two increasingly important concerns of development studies: the intersubjective realm of meanings and values in development and the area related to the environment and sustainable development.

The gap between theory and reality in neoclassical theory is largely rooted in a series of unrealistic assumptions, especially those linked to the *homo economicus* postulate. The concept of *homo economicus* attempts to reduce the complexity of real-world decision making to the universal trait of economically rational choice making. Such reductionism strips development processes of possibilities for variation and change based on individual motivations and beliefs, as well as the influence of historically constituted societal structures and relations. *Homo economicus* becomes a creature solely of the marketplace, devoid of a history, culture, and social and political relations. Moreover, markets are assumed to react similarly everywhere—as if non-market mechanisms had no bearing on market outcomes. The sphere of market exchange is abstracted from the realm of production and relations of power. In the end, an ideological conception of the market is offered as a substitute for particular, historically constituted markets in different countries. Likewise, a highly ideological conception of the state is offered in place of a careful analysis of variations in state intervention, institutional structures and power relations. In reality, both states and their politics are highly differentiated among Third World countries. Sources of this differentiation originate both from the internal structures of the state itself and from the broader realm of state-society relations. In order to address sources of this political differentiation, as well as variations in social, cultural and economic relations in general, development studies need to avoid the type of ideological narrow-mindedness and discipline-centrism to which neoliberalism has unfortunately succumbed.

Closely related to neoliberalism's problems with economism is its dependence

on an essentially positivist mode of scientific enquiry. More broadly, positivist methods restrict research to the narrow empirical world of observable events and phenomena. Other components of reality, such as social relations, values, meanings and interpretations, are excluded from serious consideration. Individuals and social groups are treated like atomistic objects or things that follow universal laws and are devoid of any social content or meaning. However, if development concerns processes of human action and interaction rather than just goods and resources, it is important to deepen our understanding of what it is to be human. This necessitates incorporating a hermeneutic component into development studies that addresses how human actions and social relations are linked with intersubjective values and meanings. The hermeneutic environment of social practices is profoundly historical in nature, rather than being universal as is assumed in neoclassical theory. Social practices, which in the closed empirical world of neoliberalism may appear to be similar, may in the real world be interpreted quite differently and may take on distinct meanings across time and space.

Another serious theoretical shortcoming of the neoliberal development framework that stems from its neoclassical roots is its inappropriate treatment of issues related to the environment and sustainability. Natural resources and ecosystems have either been ignored completely or treated peripherally as mere externalities by neoclassical models and development projects. Thanks largely to the efforts of environmentalists and others interested in creating more sustainable forms of development, a multifaceted critique has emerged of the neoclassical treatment of the environment. This critique may be divided into the following problem areas: the aggregation of individual preferences into collective values on the environment, the expression of environmental costs and benefits as market prices, techniques of environmental accounting and the measurement of depreciation, issues of intergenerational equity and the choice of an appropriate discount rate, imbalances of power and equity issues within and among societies, the imposition by the North on the South of both neoclassically driven development initiatives and environmental agendas, the use of linear models and equilibrium concepts to study ecological processes, and the treatment of the environment and natural resources as externalities. Given these basic theoretical problems, as well as the poor environmental record of neoclassically driven development projects in many Third World countries, many analysts are calling for changes in both development theories and practices. To provide more sustainable forms of development, economic mechanisms must be complemented by specific regulations designed by the state and other authorities to ensure that development practices conform to ecological standards and social goals. In order to be effective, this will also mean the creation of democratic institutions at various scales to facilitate popular participation in environmental decision making.

Notes

¹ There are, however, other traditions within economics that place more stress on the contributions that non-economic factors make towards economic growth and development. John Stuart Mill focused attention

- on the psychological factors involved in economic growth. Ragnar Nurske emphasised the social and political factors upon which economic development is based alongside capital formation. Gunnar Myrdal criticised tendencies towards 'economic reductionism' in development theory and called on analysts to pay attention to sociocultural and institutional factors.
- ² A O Hirschman, 'The rise and decline of development economics', in *Essays in Trespassing: Economics to Politics and Beyond*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, pp 1-24.
 - ³ S Bowles & G Gintis, 'The revenge of homo economicus: contested exchange and the revival of political economy', *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 7, 1993, pp 83-102; P Nicholaides, 'Limits to the expansion of neoclassical economics', *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 12, 1988, pp 313-328; P Streeten, 'Markets and states: against minimalism', *World Development*, 21, 1993, pp 1281-1298.
 - ⁴ H Bruton, 'The search for a development economics', *World Development*, 13, 1985, p 1105.
 - ⁵ M Feldman, 'What kind of economics for what kind of planning?', *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 53, 1987, p 428.
 - ⁶ P Hirsch, S Michaels & R Friedman, 'Dirty hands versus clean models: is sociology in danger of being seduced by economics?', *Theory and Society*, 16, 1987, p 322.
 - ⁷ T J Barnes, 'Rationality and relativism in economic geography: an interpretative review of the homo economicus assumption', *Progress in Human Geography*, 12, 1988, p 477.
 - ⁸ T Barnes & E Sheppard, 'Is there a place for the rational actor? A geographical critique of the rational choice paradigm', *Economic Geography*, 68, 1992, pp 1-21; P Nicholaides, 'Limits to the expansion of neoclassical economics', pp 313-328.
 - ⁹ Several analysts have noted that this has been a problem not only in the Third World but also in Eastern Europe, where outside neoliberal advisors have imposed policy measures that have often been unworkable because of a lack of basic knowledge of existing conditions within the countries of the region. Winiecki, for example, states, 'The architects of "heterodox" stabilization programs for post-STEs [Soviet-type economies] in East and Central Europe clearly neglected most of the legacy of these countries' past economic system. This omission meant that policies and particularly policy measures taken within the framework of stabilization cum liberalization were sometimes expected to deliver outcomes that a better knowledge of the STE regime would regard as unattainable.' J Winiecki, 'Knowledge of Soviet-type economy and heterodox stabilization-based outcomes in Eastern Europe', *Weltwirtschaftliches*, 129, 1993, p 405.
 - ¹⁰ F Stewart, 'Review of Deepak Lal: the poverty of development economics', *Journal of Development Studies*, 21, 1985, p 285.
 - ¹¹ K Havnevik (ed), *The IMF and the World Bank in Africa*, Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1987, p 425.
 - ¹² Family firms commonly integrate production and consumption decisions, which may lead to outcomes quite different from those in which production and consumption decisions are made separately (as is assumed in neoclassical theory). Analysts of Third World rural development have particularly objected to depictions of peasant behaviour (ie as conservative, economically irrational, afraid to take risks) that are based on neoclassical assumptions of profit maximisation within the sphere of production (M Lipton, 'Limits of price policy for agriculture: which way for the World Bank?', *Development Policy Review*, 5, 1987, pp 197-215). Similarly, parastatals often may not follow the maximising criteria of neoclassical theory, but may commonly be directed by various types of bureaucratic/satisficing behaviour designed to meet different goals.
 - ¹³ S Bitar, 'Neo conservatism versus neo-structuralism in Latin America', *CEPAL Review*, 34, 1988, pp 45-62; F Cardoso & E Faletto, *Dependency and Development in Latin America*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1979; H Stein & E W Nafriger, 'Structural adjustment, human needs, and the World Bank agenda', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 29, 1991, pp 173-189.
 - ¹⁴ G K Helleiner, *The New Global Economy and the Developing Countries: Essays in International Economics and Development*, Brookfield, VT: Grower, 1990.
 - ¹⁵ K Mengisteab & B Logan, 'Implications of liberalization policies for agricultural development in sub-Saharan Africa', *Comparative Political Studies*, 22, 1990, pp 437-457.
 - ¹⁶ Corbridge notes, for example, that the global market in foodgrains is dominated by just five 'merchants of grain' (S Corbridge, 'Urban rural relations and the counterrevolution in development theory and policy', in R Potter & T Unwin (eds), *The Geography of Urban-Rural Interaction in Developing Countries*, London: Routledge, 1989, pp 253-254). Domination of global markets by First World importers particularly affects the price elasticity of primary commodities exported by the poorest and most dependent rural-based Third World countries, many of which are concentrated in Africa.
 - ¹⁷ D Booth, 'Marxism and development sociology: interpreting the impasse', *World Development*, 13, 1985, pp 761-787.
 - ¹⁸ J Dietz & D James, 'Trends in development theory in Latin America: from Prebisch to the present', in Dietz & James (eds), *Progress Toward Development in Latin America: From Prebisch to Technological Autonomy*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990, p 9.

- ¹⁹ P Klein, 'American institutionalism: premature death, permanent resurrection', *Journal of Economic Issues*, 1978, p 266.
- ²⁰ Drawing on evidence from a wide range of Third World markets, White identifies four different types of power that shape the way markets operate: the politics of state involvement or the realm of state power and regulation; the politics of market organisation or the realm of associational power and internal market regulation; the politics of market structure; and the politics of social embeddedness involving various forms of social, cultural, and ideological power (G White, 'Towards a political analysis of markets', *IDS Bulletin*, 24, 1993, pp 2-3).
- ²¹ Dietz & James, 'Trends in development in Latin America', pp 1-11; Z Onis, 'The logic of the developmental state', *Comparative Politics*, 24, 1991, pp 109-126.
- ²² T Banuri & E Amadeo, 'Worlds within the Third World: labour market institutions in Asia and Latin America', in T Banuri (ed), *Economic Liberalization: No Panacea: The Experience of Latin America and Asia*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1991, p 173.
- ²³ Z Onis, 'The logic of the developmental state', p 125.
- ²⁴ T J Biersteker, 'Reducing the role of the state in the economy: a conceptual exploration of IMF and World Bank prescriptions', *International Studies Quarterly*, 34, 1990, pp 477-492; Megisteb & Logan, 'Implications of liberalization policies', pp 437-457; P Streeten, 'Markets and states', pp 1281-1298; R Wade, 'Managing trade: Taiwan and South Korea as challenges to economics and political science', *Comparative Politics*, 25, 1993, pp 147-167.
- ²⁵ Megisteb & Logan, 'Implications of liberalization policies', p 454.
- ²⁶ G O'Donnell, 'Reflections on the patterns of change in the bureaucratic-authoritarian state', *Latin American Research Review*, 13, 1978, pp 3-38.
- ²⁷ S Bitar, 'Neo-conservatism versus neo-structuralism in Latin America', pp 45-62; S Chakravaty, 'Development strategies for growth with equity: the South Asian experience', *Asian Development Review*, 8, 1990, pp 133-159; S Rashid, 'Economics and the study of its past', *World Development*, 16, 1988, pp 207-218; P Steidlmeier, *The Paradox of Poverty: A Reappraisal of Economic Development Policy*, Cambridge, MA: Ballinger, 1987.
- ²⁸ Charles Schultze, former president of the American Economic Association, quoted in R Kuttner, 'The poverty of economics', *Atlantic Monthly*, February 1985, pp 74-84.
- ²⁹ B Balassa, 'The lessons of East Asian development: an overview', *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 36 (3), 1988, p S274.
- ³⁰ G G Joseph, V Reddy & M Searle-Chatterjee, 'Eurocentrism in the social sciences', *Race and Class*, 31, 1990, pp 1-26; A H Somjee, *Development Theory: Critiques and Explorations*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991.
- ³¹ A H Somjee, *Development Theory*, pp 43-44.
- ³² C Wilber, 'Methodological debate in economics: editor's introduction', *World Development*, 14, 1986, pp 143-145.
- ³³ This is true not only for development specialists from the North, but also for many professionals from the South who are responsible for designing and implementing development policies in their respective countries. Many leading Third World development professionals have received the bulk of their graduate training within a handful of economics departments and associated disciplines in well known First World universities. An important part of such training involves a 'socialisation process' in the subject areas, theoretical discourses and methods of analysis that are deemed appropriate for the advanced study of development. Given this type of academic socialisation, other types of subjects, concepts and theories, and research methods that do not easily fit the established parameters of the accepted models may seem peculiar and out of place. This may even include forms of indigenous knowledge from the home countries of Western-educated development professionals who have spent a prolonged period away from their own Third World countries. In effect, these development professionals have adopted the discourse and methods of the international community of mainstream development 'experts' that serve the interests of global capital and the core capitalist countries.
- ³⁴ J Dreze & A Sen, *Hunger and Public Action*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989; B Ingham, 'The meaning of development: interactions between new and old ideas', *World Development*, 21, 1993, pp 1803-1821; P Streeten, 'Markets and states', pp 1281-1298.
- ³⁵ R D Hamrin, 'Ethical economics: a new paradigm for global justice and stewardship', *Futures*, 21, 1989, p 609.
- ³⁶ P Dasgupta & M Maler, 'The environment and emerging development issues', paper presented to the Annual Conference on Development Economics, Washington, DC: World Bank, 1990; M Munasinghe, 'Environmental issues and economic decisions in developing countries', *World Development*, 21, 1993 pp 1729-1748.
- ³⁷ It should also be noted, however, that there is probably less agreement on the concept of sustainable development itself. For some, sustainability permits maximising economic growth, albeit with strict environmental constraints. For others, sustainability means protecting and preserving ecosystems through minimising uses of the natural environment beyond those that meet people's basic material needs.

- ³⁸ F Dietz & J van der Stratten, 'Rethinking environmental economics: missing links between economic theory and environmental policy', *Journal of Economic Issues*, 26, 1992, p 29.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, p 42.
- ⁴⁰ H Hotelling, 'The economics of exhaustible resources', *Journal of Political Economy*, 39, 1931, pp 137-175; E Barbier, 'The contribution of environmental and resource economics to an economics of sustainable development', *Development and Change*, 20, 1989, p 430.
- ⁴¹ E Barbier, 'The contribution of environmental and resource economics', p 431.
- ⁴² W Nordhaus & J Tobin, 'Growth and natural resources', in R Dorfman & N Dorfman (eds), *Economics of the Environment*, New York: W W Norton, 1977, p 402.
- ⁴³ From the Club of Rome's 'limits to growth' approach (M Mesarovic & E Pestel, *Mankind at the Turning Point: The Second Report to the Club of Rome*, New York: Dutton and Co, 1974) to the Brundtland Commission's concept of sustainable development (World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), various theoretical frameworks have recently been popularised as alternatives to the treatment of natural resources and the environment by neoclassical development theory. In general, these alternative frameworks emphasise the ecologically bounded possibilities of using natural resources as a normative starting-point for the formulation of a more environmentally sensitive strategy of development.
- ⁴⁴ W Ascher & R Healy, *Natural Resource Policymaking in Developing Countries: Environment, Economic Growth and Income Distribution*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990; I Taylor, 'The World Bank and the environment: the World Development Report', *World Development*, 21, 1993, pp 869-881.
- ⁴⁵ There is some question, however, whether such recognition has led to fundamental changes not only in the rhetoric of these international organisations, but also in their actual practices.
- ⁴⁶ World Bank, *World Development Report*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992, pp 13-14.
- ⁴⁷ Dietz & van der Stratten, 'Rethinking environmental economics', p 31-32.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p 31.
- ⁴⁹ G K Helleiner, 'Conventional foolishness and overall ignorance: current approaches to global transformation and development', *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, 10, 1989, pp 107-120; M Munasinghe, 'Environmental issues and economic decisions', pp 1729-1748.
- ⁵⁰ For example, a study by the World Resources Institute lowered the historical growth rate of Indonesia from 7% to 4% to take into consideration the underlying depletion of its forests, soil fertility and oil reserves (R Repetto, W Magrath, M Wells, C Beer & F Rossini, *Wasting Assets: Natural Resources in the National Income Accounts*, Washington, DC: World Resources Institute, 1989).
- ⁵¹ In J Wimpenny, 'Environmental values and their implications for development', *Development Policy Review*, 9, 1991, p 383.
- ⁵² For example, Munasinghe describes recent exploratory studies in Mexico and Papua New Guinea by the World Bank and the United Nations Statistical Office to try to develop a new System of National Accounts which will yield an Environmentally-Adjusted Net Domestic Product (IDP) and an Environmentally-Adjusted Net Income (IDN). M Munasinghe, 'Environmental issues and economic decisions', p 1733.
- ⁵³ S Amin, 'Can environmental problems be subject to economic calculations?', *Monthly Review*, 45 (7), 1993, pp 16-32; G K Helleiner, 'Conventional foolishness and overall ignorance'; B Ingham, 'The meaning of development', pp 1803-1821.
- ⁵⁴ G K Helleiner, 'Conventional foolishness and overall ignorance', p 118.
- ⁵⁵ World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*, p 8.
- ⁵⁶ Dietz & van der Stratten, 'Rethinking environmental economics', p 37.
- ⁵⁷ R Broad & J Cavanaugh, 'Marco's ghost', *The Amicus Journal*, 11, 1989, pp 18-29.
- ⁵⁸ B Ingham, 'The meaning of development', p 1816.
- ⁵⁹ I Taylor, 'The World Bank and the environment', pp 869-881.
- ⁶⁰ P Adams, 'The World Bank and the IMF in sub-Saharan Africa: undermining development and environmental sustainability', *Journal of International Affairs*, 46, 1992, pp 125-144.
- ⁶¹ S Amin, 'Can environmental problems', pp 16-32; Dietz & van der Stratten, 'Rethinking environmental economics', pp 27-51; Wimpenny, 'Environmental values', pp 381-390.
- ⁶² G Francis, 'Great Lakes governance and the ecosystem approach: where next?', *Alternatives*, 3, 1986, p 66.
- ⁶³ See Barbier, 'The contribution of environmental and resource economics', pp 429-459.
- ⁶⁴ S Batie, 'Sustainable development: challenges to the agricultural economics profession', *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 71, 1989, pp 1083-1101.

FEATURE REVIEWS

The medicine man cometh: diagnoses and prescriptions for Africa's ills

David Simon

Adjusting to Policy Failure in African Economies

edited by David E. Sahn

Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994

pp 423, pb £15.50, hb £38.95

Africa within the World: beyond dispossession and dependence

edited by Adebayo Adedeji

London: Zed Books in association with the African Centre for Development and Strategic Studies, 1993

pp 234, pb £13.95, hb £36.95

African Perspectives on Development

edited by Ulf Himmelstrand, Kabiru Kinyanjui & Edward Mburugu

London: James Currey; New York: St Martin's Press; Nairobi: EAEP; Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota; Harare: Baobab; Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 1994

pp 342, £12.95 pb

What does one do if one doesn't like the doctor's diagnosis? Deny the illness? Ignore the advice and hope for spontaneous recovery? Sack the doctor? Get a second opinion? Or decry the limited horizons of conventional medicine and consult a practitioner of an alternative, holistic, medical or belief system? Such dilemmas come to mind when reading the diverse research findings on and policy prescriptions for addressing Africa's protracted development crisis. The precise data collected, conclusions reached and policy measures advocated depend on the precise nature of the research, the questions asked as well as those not asked, and the objectives, theoretical orientation and institutional contexts of the research and the researchers. It should be no surprise, therefore, that the voluminous literature on the experience of structural adjustment and economic recovery programmes and on alternative potential development paths for Africa is filled with often diametrically opposite conclusions and recommendations for specific countries arising out of studies conducted more or less simultaneously. The edited volumes reviewed here are no exceptions, and the uninitiated reader perusing them together might be forgiven a sense of mild schizophrenia.

Until quite recently it was possible to distinguish clearly between what one might dub Afro-pessimists and Afro-optimists. There was a pronounced dichotomy between those—principally but not exclusively outsiders—who could see no prospect of recovery or more successful development on the continent and often revelled in recounting tales of gloom and doom, and those—mainly Africans and 'radical' outsiders—with a conviction that, if only the shackles of global exploitation could be broken, alternative development futures were achievable.

Today the spectrum of opinion is more diverse and generally less simplistically extreme. Many of the Cold War certainties have evaporated, variants of socialism have been abandoned wholesale by regimes in Africa and elsewhere, and Western donor

governments argue vociferously that the strings of economic and political conditions attached to their aid have promoted 'democratisation' and positive change in Africa. However, not everything has changed. Oxfam and other development agencies ended up walking out of the recent UN Social Development summit in Copenhagen where they were not being given appropriate access to the main debating forum which they were seeking to monopolise. More generally, multiparty elections in Africa are proving no more of a guarantee of participatory democracy than the implementation of structural adjustment and economic recovery programmes can ensure large inflows of foreign direct investment or provide unimpeded access to export markets in the north.

Within the stream of publications on Africa, at least three broad tendencies can be distinguished. The first continues to argue that the primary causes of the economic problems internal to Africa: in extreme forms, this position attaches 'blame', citing inappropriate policies, corruption and poor management, often exacerbated by war or strife or 'natural disasters' like drought. Advocates of this position hold that it is therefore both right and necessary for Africa to bear the principal burden and responsibility of adjustment, although measures to address the most extreme social consequences are belatedly being advocated. The second broad position argues that the problems can be explained to a significant extent in terms of Africa's colonial inheritance of structurally unequal and exploitative external relations with the North. The balance of change therefore has to be shared, although the precise balance and agenda differs among its advocates. The extreme view that Africa's ills are entirely externally induced, now lacks any credence. The third broad perspective advocates predominantly African-centred solutions and alternative development trajectories based on principles rather different in origin and nature from those prescribed by the (principally Northern) proponents of structural adjustment.

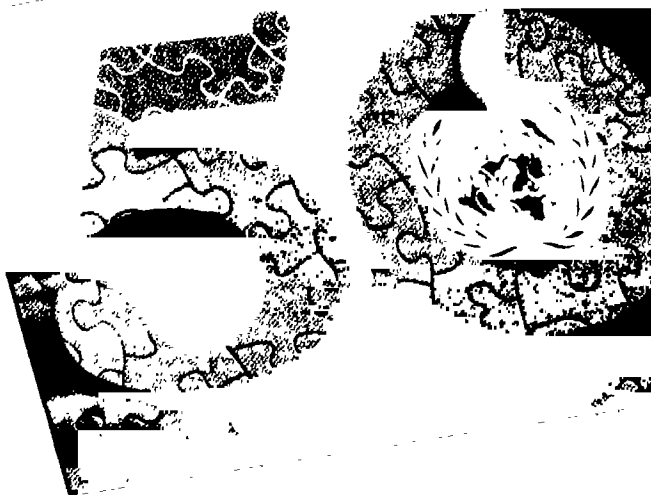
So where do these three recent additions to the literature fit in? The diverse perspectives conveyed by contributors to edited volumes—as these all are—often make classification difficult. Nevertheless, in these cases their pedigrees are reasonably clear. As the title of *Adjusting to Policy Failure in African Economies* suggests, it fits squarely into my first category, providing detailed accounts and analyses of macroeconomic problems in a selection of sub-Saharan African countries and the nature of structural adjustment measures adopted to address them. By contrast, *Africa in the 1990s* and *African Perspectives on Development* represent the third stream of work, summarising research findings and a range of alternative perspectives on development possibilities and constraints. Interestingly, they have been written mainly by Africans.

In *Adjusting to Policy Failure*, David Sahn has edited undoubtedly the most focused and tightly woven set of contributions. This stems no doubt from the close working relationship among the authors, mostly based at or associated with the Food and Nutrition Policy Program, and the unity of purpose flowing therefrom. The approach is conventionally economic, and while this probably makes for closer comparability between chapters, it has the drawback of precluding interdisciplinary perspectives and of focusing almost exclusively on the productive sectors of the economy concerned. The book pulls together the experience and results of research over several years into the severity of economic crisis and policy reform in the Gambia, Guinea, Niger, Cameroon, Zaïre, Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique and Madagascar. This selection of diverse countries, straddling the continent from west to east and from the Sahara to the Tropic of Capricorn, includes states with British, French, Portuguese and other colonial inheritances and thus provides an unusually good opportunity for comparative work and the drawing of salient, generalisable conclusions. However, this is tacked on to the important concluding essay by the editor, since, with the exception

fought and died heroically under the bullet or torture, there was no failure, only a deep despair which continues to this day.

Rubin's book looks at the underlying trends in Afghan society that first helped create such a conflict and then helped distance all participants to the point where any solution remains difficult. Both books are brilliant tour de forces, emanating from a deep passion not only for Afghans and their tragedy, but also a passion for impeccable scholarship and a profound wisdom.

Celebrating the UN's 50th Anniversary? Don't Forget the Missing Piece!



Ever had the feeling something's missing? The United Nations of today was designed 50 years ago to reflect the diversity of all nations and promote peace. Yet, at the world body's 50th anniversary celebration this year in San Francisco, one of UN's founding members, the Republic of China, is being kept on the sidelines.

Even though one missing piece might not seem to affect the overall picture that much, that piece still represents the 21 million people of the Republic of China on Taiwan, more than the population of any of nearly two-thirds of the UN membership. Until ROC citizens are given a voice at the UN, the world body can hardly be truly universal.

The people of Taiwan have much to offer the world if it will only let them give: experience in accomplishing remarkable economic growth, and peacefully achieving democracy to name just a couple. As we savor this milestone for the UN and look to the future, doesn't it make a lot of sense to complete the picture now?

Return the Republic of China on Taiwan to the UN!

TODAY'S TAIWAN
REPUBLIC OF CHINA



result of more effective tax collection or the changing price and policy environment, transactions began returning to official channels. *This would have increased GNP calculations significantly, even if the actual level of economic activity had remained unchanged.*

Similar points could be made about each of the other chapters, although the particular circumstances of the countries concerned differ. For example, Jehan Arulpragasam and David Sahn document the extent to which, in Guinea's agricultural sector,

The ensuing consequence of such low official producer prices and related institution and market failures was the virtual cessation of production for official markets. (p 60)

Subsequent reforms, including producer price increases and market liberalisations, led to substantial increases in agricultural exports and thus foreign exchange and tax revenue. Although careful to make explicit that they are referring to officially marketed output, they imply (if only by omission) that overall production is likely to have fallen. This is obviously difficult to prove one way or the other. However, their failure even to mention the growing significance of informal and sometimes illegal cross-border trade (ie export-import flows) in West Africa during the 1980s,² is unfortunate. It is another example of the reluctance to acknowledge the importance of life beyond the state (whether through choice or desperation) to many Africans.

In Cameroon, David Blandford *et al* explore how oil revenues masked underlying structural economic problems until the price began to fall in the mid-1980s. Stephen Kyle rightly highlights the centrality of war and its associated destruction and economic distortions to any analysis of Mozambique's plight and emergence as the poorest country on the World Bank's per capita GNP scale, deriving the greater part of its GNP from official development assistance. The chapter on Zaïre by wa Bilenga Tshishimbi (with Peter Glick and Erik Thorbecke), appropriately entitled 'Missed opportunity for adjustment in a rent-seeking society', conveys the descent into chaos well, indicating how that adroit political operator, Mobutu sese Seko has defied the odds by retaining power while enriching himself and his cronies at the expense of the state and general populace, hoodwinking foreign donors who until recently had tolerated his excesses in the name of geopolitical expediency. Unfortunately, the dramas of the last two to three years have not been captured because the chapter, as with the rest of the book, was written in late 1991; this delay in publication is regrettable.

For reasons explained above, David Sahn's concluding essay is both important and worrying. While emphasising the diversity of experience and dangers of generalisations, he restates unequivocally at the outset that:

The story of economic deterioration in Africa ... is predominantly a consequence of the failure of domestic policy and of the institutions the state helped to develop and sustain. Exogenous factors have also been harmful, especially given the structure of the economies as inherited after independence. Policy, however, determines the degree to which shocks can be absorbed and the degree to which economic transformation occurs. On both counts, examples of state failures abound. (p 366)

The emphasis—as in structural adjustment policies themselves—on trade and pricing policies takes for granted that the promotion of agricultural exports is desirable, beneficial and unproblematic. For example, I searched in vain for some discussion of the relative merits of export promotion (cash crops) and production for the domestic market (food and cash crops). This highlights the narrow conceptual bounds of the research reported, which never questions, either implicitly or explicitly, the conventional IMF/World Bank assumptions regarding the validity of comparative advantage as the determinant of economic and trade policy. The overriding message is that African states

must adjust to the international economy (world market). The objective to be striven for is accelerated economic growth as a prerequisite for any redistribution. Sahn does, however, concede that some state intervention may be appropriate:

Left unresolved is to what extent wholehearted adoption of the free market is in the best long-term interests of African agriculture. It is clear that, relative to the failures of market interventions in the past, the failures of the unfettered market will in most cases represent a vast improvement. This should not, however, be confused with the suggestion that no intervention in pricing is the best medium- and long-term strategy. (p 378)

The limits of structural adjustment policies, in terms of their ability to address wider structural problems, are recognised. He identifies the future challenges of strengthening civil and political institutions and the formal sector, and alleviating poverty and improving income distribution. However, and quite remarkably, nowhere in the book is any mention made of different paths to development, to debates and efforts to promote more environmentally sustainable development and the like. None of the terms 'development', 'environment' and 'sustainability' even appears in the index.

The contrast on these last counts with the other two volumes being reviewed could not be sharper. They are centrally concerned with alternative perspectives on development in and for Africa. Nevertheless, their coverage is broader, somewhat more fragmented and the degree of conceptual or topical cohesion looser, especially in Himmelstrand *et al.* In *Africa within the World*, Adebayo Adedeji, the renowned former head of the UN Economic Commission for Africa, has compiled a comprehensive set of views from eminent African and other analysts of Africa and development issues. Originating in a high profile conference of Adedeji's African Centre for Development and Strategic Studies in Dakar in late 1992, this 19-chapter volume addresses the 'big issues' in a broad sweep approach. It is divided into four main sections, respectively on dispossession and dependence: a historical view (contributions by Basil Davidson and Pius Okigbo); Africa and the emerging new world order (Sadig Rasheed, Susan George, Pascal Gayama and Timothy Shaw); components of a sane and sustainable global order (Louis Emerij, Babacar Ndiaye, Layashi Yaker, Ivan Head, Mary Chinery-Hesse and Siegfried Pausewang); and Africa beyond dispossession and dependence (Seyyid Abdulai, Hans-Dieter Klee, Bade Onimode, Hassan Sunmonu, Nthato Motlana and Adedeji himself). The coverage is comprehensive and challenging, as might be expected from an eminent group of provocative and progressive thinkers. Although a number of papers and a handful of recent books have addressed the subject of Africa's marginality in the world order in terms broader than structural adjustment,¹ this will come to be regarded as one of the most articulate and coherent sets of pieces on African 'futures'. Adedeji's Introduction explains the context:

In posing the question "Is Africa's marginalisation reversible?" we also wanted to stimulate a new assessment of centre and margin, inspired by the other history of the last 25 years which is questioning growth for growth's sake, an economic order with exploding profits based on mere paper transactions, on money-laundering and on ecological destruction. This other history is also a challenge to the perception that marginality is necessarily 'disempowering' and suggests that it can assume a subversive and subvertible quality...Yet I remain sceptical whether appeals to those who engineered Africa's marginalisation over centuries — and I am referring not only to the dispossessors from outside the continent but also to those who siphoned Africa's riches into off-shore bank accounts—to yield political space or to return resources will make a dent of difference. I do not want to suggest for a moment that I have answers. (pp 12–13).

One of the more provocative ideas addressed in this volume is an assertion by Basil

Davidson that restitution from former colonisers and TNCs should be sought—an argument aired over the last few years by Ali Mazrui. The general tenor of the other contributions is that Africa must assert its own future increasingly vociferously, and not rely on outside agents and forces. Sadig Rasheed argues that there is no choice but to reverse the trends of increased economic crisis and marginalisation, worsening economic and humanitarian conditions and the emergence of new conflicts, despite some positive national and regional developments. The state needs to be restructured, regional markets enlarged and a greater emphasis placed on internally focused development:

There is thus no alternative to getting on with socio-economic transformation through increased national and collective self-reliance, internalisation of the forces of growth and development, and economic integration at the sub-regional and regional levels. With the economically strong nationals fortressing their economies behind regional economic, monetary and trade zones, it would be utterly naïve for African countries to believe that they would stand a chance of survival or relevance within the global economy without fundamental modifications to their economies and greater regional economic solidarity, cooperation and integration. Africa would be the odd man [sic] out in a game it is neither trained nor equipped to play. (pp 57–58)

Although there are clearly some echoes here of 1960s and 1970s *dependendist* arguments, there is no suggestion of autarchy as a realistic or desirable option, while the magnitude of Africa's crisis is undoubtedly greater today than two or three decades ago. The distinction between self-sufficiency and (collective) self-reliance is worth making explicit: besides, regional trading blocs are being established around the world. Timothy Shaw points out that—as I mentioned in a different context above—the spread of multipartyism does not imply a wider, more fundamental democratisation and participation. However, this latter should remain the goal:

The subjection of the state to the continuous democratic process of accountability, responsibility and transparency is crucial. I suggest that unless ecological, gender, and informal sector elements are recognised and prioritised in any foreseeable democratic formulation, then sustainable development will remain elusive because the paradigm of adjustment will prevail as it did throughout the lost decade of the 1980s. Hence there is an imperative for truly popular and radical intellectualism, political struggles and alternatives—what I term “revisionist radicalism”—which democratic pressures facilitate and require, but which authoritarian and corporatist regime machinations are still always ready to repress. These will be the ongoing dialectics of African adjustment into the next century. (p 93)

Of course, as several contributors argue, these African concerns and challenges represent a microcosm of those facing the South as a whole. Further, measures parallel to those being advocated for Africa would be expected of the world at large. Adedeji summarises the basic strategy as comprising four elements: a fundamental political commitment to development and its acceleration, the immediate pursuit of specific development imperatives, the revision of Africa's external relations, and the pursuit of collective self-reliance and regional integration (p 213). Nobody is pretending that this represents an easy agenda; however, this vision is fundamentally different from the minimalist state envisaged by Sahn *et al.* It also finds an echo in some of the more conceptual chapters of *African Perspectives on Development*, especially those by Göran Hydén, Samir Amin and Mahmood Mamdani—the last of whom provides a critical evaluation of the IMF's structural adjustment programme in Uganda.

Overall, however, this volume is far broader ranging and eclectic than the other two. Ulf Himmelstrand and his co-editors commissioned the chapters from contributors in a variety of African countries and working on a wide variety of subjects, asking them to address several specific questions relating to controversies of fact or theoretical

interpretation, the nature of alternative paradigms and explanations, the interrelationship between different paradigms, and the nature of recognition (or non-recognition) of legitimate objects of knowledge and enquiry. The result is, nevertheless, uneven and diverse, not least in terms of the length and conceptual sophistication of the chapters. The 23 chapters are grouped into seven sections, covering a wide social scientific spectrum, including theoretical perspectives on African development; population issues; the economy; social differentiation, ethnicity, gender and class; state-society relations; and social institutions and social organisation. The dominant emphasis is on research into development problems and processes, in other words, on 'what is' or 'what has been', rather than 'what might be in the future', and it is therefore difficult to compare directly with either of the other two books being reviewed. In many respects, the theoretical chapters have rather more in common with the books edited by Frans Schuurman and Margareta von Troil⁴ that I reviewed in *TWQ* Vol. 15, No 2.

The diversity of coverage militates against reading the book in its entirety; readers are more likely to find individual sections or chapters of interest. Perhaps inevitably in view of the problems of access to recent books and journals published abroad, much of the literature cited is somewhat dated and not all the research issues and debates addressed are necessarily topical. However, there are several easily avoidable slips, such as the map of Zimbabwe used in Masipula Sithole's chapter about whether multiparty democracy is possible in a multi-ethnic state, which still gives the colonial place names that were changed in the early 1980s. Patrick Atila's account of the history of smallholder credit for rural development in Kenya is missing a crucial 'not' which rather changes the sense of his argument that 'It was thus [not] until much later towards the close of the colonial period that there were signs of the emergence of smallholder credit for Africans' (p 110). Ulf Himmelstrand's Figure 1.1 of 'a simplified property space of developmental types' is far from simple. One other unfortunate drawback, which reflects production considerations rather than content, is that the large pages of extremely small and densely packed typeset are difficult to plough through and are likely to discourage many potential readers.

Nevertheless, such blemishes aside, the book must rate as one of the most comprehensive collections by African social scientists (plus two Swedes, namely Himmelstrand and Göran Hydén), providing their perspectives on aspects of Africa's development experience and current predicament. It is indeed encouraging that the work of African scholars is now finding wider international exposure, both in journals and in books such as the two reviewed here. This contributes to the task of bridge-building and mutual understanding that is so vital if the unequal terms of exchange between Africa and the North—including intellectual relations—are to be addressed.

Notes

¹ D Simon, W Van Spengen, C Dixon & A Nürman (eds), *Structurally Adjusted Africa: Poverty, Debt and Basic Needs*, London: Pluto Press, 1995.

² I. De Haan, A Klaasse Bos & C Lutz, Regional food trade and policy in West Africa in relation to structural adjustment, in *ibid.*

³ See for example J W Harbeson & D Rothchild (eds), *Africa in World Politics*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992.

⁴ F Schuurman (ed), *Beyond the Impasse: New Directions in Development Theory*, London: Zed Books, 1993; and M Von Troil (ed), *Changing Paradigms in Development: South, East and West: A Meeting of Minds in Africa*, Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1993.

Algeria Unmasked: the fiction of Rachid Mimouni (1945–1995)

Farida Abu-Haidar

It has often been remarked that postcolonial literature is a faithful reflection of the social and political climate of the countries which produce it. Writers frequently use psychological insight to explore and project the life they see around them. This seems to be the case as far as Africa is concerned, where literary works, whether in English, French or the mother tongue of the writer in question, often appear to be living testaments of the world they depict. Algeria, for its part, has been a major contributor to the francophone output of Africa. One Algerian writer who can be credited with providing authentic documents of post-independence Algeria is the late Rachid Mimouni, who died in February 1995. In just over a decade—from 1982, when his novel, *Le fleuve détourné*, was published, to 1993, when his last work, *La Malédiction*, appeared—Mimouni was one of a handful of writers from the Maghreb who dominated the francophone literary scene. His works, which won a number of literary prizes, were translated into the major world languages, thus reaching a wider readership than the Maghrebian and French.

Le Fleuve détourné was the first of Mimouni's novels to be published in France. It was, however, his third novel. His first two, *Le Printemps n'en sera que plus beau* (1978) and *Une Paix à vivre* (1983) were published in Algeria. The author later admitted in an interview that both novels had been written several years before they were actually published.² They had also been heavily censored and cut. *Le Printemps n'en sera que plus beau* is Mimouni's only novel set during the Algerian war of independence (1954–1962). The title, that Spring cannot but be better, refers to the symbolic Spring of independence, a contrast to the 'chill' of the war years. And in order to emphasise the lack of warmth, Mimouni sets his novel in December, when it is always raining and cold. Narrated by several voices, the novel shows how young people of Mimouni's generation, who reached maturity during the war years, were full of hope and expectation as they waited for the war to end and for Algeria to be rid of colonial rule.

Once war was over and the much-awaited independence proclaimed, many Algerians found it difficult to come to terms with life in peacetime. *Une Paix à vivre*, Mimouni's second novel, describes the disillusionment of a group of young students for whom independence had promised much during wartime, but delivered little in peacetime. The work describes in detail the rebuilding of lives and the attempts at striking a balance between being citizens of an Islamic country, with its age-old traditions, and members of the new world order with its increasing technological innovations. The novel asks a number of important questions. How far should Arabisation be taken? Can science and technology be taught in Arabic? Does taking Algeria into the second half of the twentieth century mean an end to Islamic values?

Mimouni, as he often stated in interviews, was disenchanted with the way the censors and publishers had dealt with his novels. For his third work he chose the first French publisher whose name he chanced to find in a magazine.³ The novel, which was published under the title *Le Fleuve détourné*, was an immediate success. It raised the relatively unknown Mimouni to the ranks of established writers from the Maghreb. Set in the years following independence, it describes the turmoil and havoc that occurs when autocratic leaders take power and rule a country despotically, squandering the wealth of the nation. The events are seen through the eyes of the central character, a poor man who had been severely injured in the war and as a result had lost his memory. When he

eventually recovers, he discovers that he had been taken to a neighbouring country and nursed back to health.

Back in Algeria he starts by looking for his wife and son. He discovers that his wife, who had given him up for dead, has turned to prostitution, her only means of survival. He finds that his son is one of thousands of aimless young men who have no prospects of employment and no hope of a good life. He and his generation are the very people the revolution seems to have betrayed. There is malnutrition and squalor everywhere in the country, yet those in power are oblivious of the basic needs of the people. They continue to squander money while the rest of the population goes hungry. The man sees that the only changes in the country are superficial ones: the latest refrigerators, colour television, Gruyère cheese, mini-skirts and rising inflation (p 49). The leaders who dream of building a prosperous country allow the birthrate to increase, but do not want to provide housing for the expanding population. They insist on the use of literary Arabic, which few people can understand (p 70). In trying to rebuild the country according to their whims, they seem to have left nothing unturned. They have even drawn straight lines on undulating hills, and diverted the course of the river which once flowed 'calm and free' (p 49).

Mimouni's fourth novel, *Tombéza* (1984), caused more of a stir than *Le Fleuve détourné*. In an interview, the author explained that he wrote these two novels because he could no longer tolerate certain conditions in his country.⁴ *Tombéza* spares no detail in describing a population at the mercy of a few power-hungry individuals, and a society afflicted with hypocrisy and false beliefs. The narrator is the eponymous character, who, when the novel opens, is lying fatally wounded in a hospital bed, remembering his previous life. The illegitimate son of a girl who was sexually assaulted by a passing stranger when she was working in the fields, he is born badly deformed as a result of the blows his mother received during her pregnancy. He grows up hated and abused, and is even barred from entering the mosque to pray. Tombéza observes that in a society obsessed with a certain code of morals, a girl who has been forcefully assaulted is condemned and punished as if she were the perpetrator of the crime and not its victim (p 232), and the child she bears carries the stigma of her 'crime' throughout his life.

When he is older Tombéza goes to work on the farm of a French settler. After independence he finds employment in an Algiers hospital. Through his eyes, as he lies dying in hospital, we see a society laid bare, where typhoid, cholera and other diseases plague the country (p 166); religious bigotry is widespread (p 55), and cruelty is the order of the day (p 45). Like all primitive people, his compatriots are dazzled by technological innovations (p 170). Tombéza is shocked by their false piety and hypocrisy. It does not seem to matter to them how they behave in their private lives, as long as on the surface they maintain a veneer of respectability. 'Living without laws and without a conscience', he concludes, 'we cannot but close in on ourselves, and sooner or later we shall be overcome with nausea' (p 263).

Mimouni's fifth novel, *L'Honneur de la tribu*, was published in 1989.⁵ Zitouna, the remote mountain village of the setting provides the backdrop to the events in the novel in much the same way as the hospital does in *Tombéza*. It is as if both the hospital and Zitouna were microcosms of Algeria. Zitouna's corrupt village elders hold sway over the rest of the inhabitants, who exist as if in a state of torpor. They are cut off from the rest of the world by the remoteness of their geographical location and by the efforts of the village elders who want to keep out modern civilisation from reaching them so that the age-old customs can go on undisturbed. They even forbid them to learn 'the language of the Christians...which can open the door for them to regular paid employment' (pp 33-34).

When the villagers are told that Zitouna has been designated county headquarters,

many are afraid that their isolated way of life will come to an end. When a new leader is appointed by the central government, he proves to be more cruel than the village elders. But the people of Zitouna succumb to his tyranny. They do not think that there is any point in rebelling. No sooner is one ruler deposed than another, more cruel than his predecessor, takes over. It is only towards the end of the novel, when an enlightened man comes to the village, that the people of Zitouna begin to understand that it is possible to go on maintaining their pride in their cultural heritage while at the same time being open to new ideas coming from outside their village.

Le Fleuve détourné, *Tombéza* and *L'Honneur de la tribu* are a trilogy of novels which depict the Algeria of post-independence years, as seen by a generation for whom independence did not prove to be the panacea they were led to believe it would be. Although the novels are specifically about Algeria, they are relevant to other countries with colonial histories and postcolonial single-party regimes.⁶ *Une Peine à vivre*, Mimouni's next novel, which appeared in 1991, is a parable of power and corruption which can occur anywhere in the world where dictatorships are the order of the day. Set in a fictitious oil-producing country, once a colonial outpost, it describes the rise to power and eventual demise of a ruthless dictator. In a number of interviews following publication of the novel, Mimouni said that he chose a fictitious setting and nameless characters to make the point that all over the world there were despots and autocrats, who rose from insignificant origins to hold sway over whole populations, and on occasion to occupy centre stage in world politics.

The story is narrated by the central character, the dictator himself, who is referred to as *Le Maréchalissime*, the highest military authority in the land. The novel opens as he is about to be executed after having been toppled from power. As the rifles are pointed at him his whole life appears before him in a flash. As a child he was shunned and humiliated because of his humble origins. Early in life he learns that the only way to succeed is to lie and cheat to get to the top. The army offers him the opportunity to become powerful. This he does by showing no mercy to anyone he comes across, and getting rid of anyone he feels is in his way. He often repeats: 'I have nothing but disdain for life, and the people I have sacrificed, whether innocent or guilty, have never troubled my conscience' (p 15). When he reaches the highest military rank the leader of the country appoints him as head of state security.

In time he deposes the leader, confining him to a closely guarded subterranean prison before eventually having him executed. As the new self-appointed *Maréchalissime*, he becomes even more powerful and cruel than his predecessor. He is, however, aware of the evil that results from absolute power and recalls his predecessor's words: 'There is nothing more vile than power. It amounts to absolute depravity, utter evil, sheer villainy, horror on a day to day basis, the worst of calamities ... One has to thrust one's hands into shit to have some idea of what it is like'. (p 112). He is also well aware that ambition and drive are often the subterfuges of people from disadvantaged backgrounds who want to camouflage their feelings of inferiority and insecurity (p 61). Eventually he too is deposed and led to the very place where thousands of his subjects were put to death on his orders. Like them, he is made to face a firing squad.

Mimouni's last novel, *La Malédiction*, was published in 1993, two years before he died. Having explored life in post-independence Algeria, with all its advantages and disadvantages, Mimouni in this novel tries to analyse the rise of religious fundamentalism in Algeria, its background and the reasons for its seeming popularity. With his characteristic linear, story-telling style, he introduces a number of characters, representing the many faces of Algeria. The novel is set mainly in a large Algiers hospital, similar to the one in *Tombéza*. Some of the events, however, take place outside the hospital, and even briefly in France. It is in and out of the hospital that the various characters drift.

There are the patients, some of whom are victims of crime, the result of growing unrest in the country. There are also the doctors, the orderlies and the nurses. Out of this amalgam of people, the reader discovers the old combatant who had taken part in the war of independence, the idealist obstetrician Kader, the central character, who cares for his patients, regardless of their social background or political affiliation, and the militant fundamentalist who turns to religious piety as fervently as he had turned to Marxism in the years immediately following independence. The events of the novel take place in June 1991, when the fundamentalists crippled the country by strikes, taking over important state buildings, like the hospital in the novel.

Mimouni has often been praised by some as a writer whose works expose his country and all its malaise. He has also been condemned by others as a controversial writer who, by raising highly sensitive issues, seems to be betraying his country. Anyone who has read a Mimouni work or listened to him during one of his many interviews, would find both opinions misguided. Mimouni was a man who both loved Algeria and felt most at home in it. He continued to live and work in Algeria, even though life there had become intolerable. He left when his life and that of his family were threatened. Unlike some Maghrebian intellectuals, he could not live in France and so moved to Tangier, saying that a Moroccan existence would be the closest he could find to an Algerian one.¹

In spite of the violence and corruption depicted in his novels, he was both a reflective and a peaceful man who firmly believed that the rebirth or salvation of any nation could only come from within, from those who love their country and their fellow citizens and yearn for a world which can accommodate different opinions and beliefs. This has been the viewpoint of a number of his compatriots. Mimouni's voice, therefore, was not a solitary one. But it was a voice which continued to ring loud and clear.

Notes

¹ Mimouni's novels are: *Le Printemps n'en sera que plus beau*, Algiers: SNEA, 1978; *Une Paix à vivre*, Algiers: ENAL, 1983; *Le fleuve détourné*, Paris: Robert Laffont, 1982; *Tombéza*, Paris: Robert Laffont, 1984; *L'Honneur de la tribu*, Paris: Robert Laffont, 1989; *Une Peine à vivre* Paris Stock, 1991; and *La Malédiction*, Stock, 1993.

² *Jeune Afrique*, 1618; 16 January 1992, pp 66-76.

³ Ibid.

⁴ *Jeune Afrique*, 1240, 10 October 1984, pp 76-80.

⁵ This novel was reviewed in *Third World Quarterly* 12 (2), April 1990, pp 147-149. It has been translated into English as *The Honour of the Tribe* and published by Quartet.

⁶ Cf Tahar Ben Jelloun's review of *L'Honneur de la tribu* in *Le Monde*, 28 July 1989.

⁷ See the tribute by Tahar Ben Jelloun in *Le Monde*, 17 February 1995.

Resisting repression in Nigeria: the lyric poetry of Femi Osofisan

Ode S Ogede

Femi Osofisan, author of the singular book of poems *Minted Coins*,¹ which instantly won the Association of Nigerian Authors Award for 1987, may be better known for his work as a dramatist who has published over a dozen plays in Nigeria, but his work in the

poetic genre also has considerable appeal. In his recent book on Nigerian drama, Chris Dunton comments in respect of his plays that:

Osofisan's work is characterized by two features that might appear mutually contradictory or whose relationship is at least problematic: an absorption in theatrical form that leads to the use of elaborate framing devices, multiple disjunctions in tone and in narrative flow, the use of role play and the play-within-the-play; and a commitment to the probing of social and economic injustice in Nigeria that consistently places the aspirations of the underprivileged as his drama's central reference point.²

Although Dunton's study makes a substantial attempt to make the international community familiar with this distinguished Nigerian playwright, critics still have a great deal of work to do on his behalf as a poet so that his general readership may recognise his powers in this genre.

This essay is intended as an effort in that direction. Osofisan's poetry is pervaded by the same ambiguity that motivates his plays and a reading of them suggests that he wants to challenge the existing inequalities in society but has had to be careful not to get into direct confrontation with the authorities for fear of his own life. He has to learn to invent intricate methods of sociopolitical criticism, involving the use of allegory, myth and the song form that appeals strongly to the emotions and intellect through its musicality, its syncopated rhythm, and its measured cadences. In this essay I will make an attempt to explore the context and poetic features which make *Minted Coins* an engaging, flamboyant and rich work of art that puts Osofisan among the most distinguished of the new generation of Nigerian poets, bringing an idyllic view of life—which he inherited from the lyric tradition pioneered by Christopher Okigbo, J P Clark (Bekederemo), Gabriel Okara, Wole Soyinka and M J C Echeruo³—to the exploration of the injustices, oppression and inhumanity of the post-independence leadership of his country.

In its passionate bonding of private and public concerns *Minted Coins* reveals the author's strong imaginative and evocative expressive powers—marks of Osofisan's genius as a poet—which reward a comprehensive and analytic study. Echoes of the ugly events which follow Nigeria's independence abound in the actual body of the poems, and it helps to place the work in context and discuss some facts about the history of the military dictatorships in Nigeria relevant to its concerns.

Nigeria gained political independence from the UK in October 1960 but the military have ruled for over 20 of the 35 years of the country's post-independence history. The first military coup, by General Aguiyi Ironsi, took place barely six years after independence, on 15 January 1966. When Ironsi was overthrown in a counter coup in July 1966, another officer, then Lt Colonel (later Major General) Yakubu Gowon came to power. Gowon's nine-year-rule was terminated by the coup of General Murtala Mohammed in 1975. When General Murtala was killed in the unsuccessful coup of Lt Colonel S D Dimka of 13 February 1976, his second-in-command, General Olusegun Obasanjo, took power and ruled until October 1979, when he handed over power to the first elected civilian president of the country, Alhaji Shehu Shagari. Upon re-election for a second term of office, Shagari was ousted from power by the coup that brought General Buhari and Brigadier Idiagbon into the limelight in 1983. On 27 August 1985 the nation was again shocked with the news of another coup, when General Ibrahim Babangida ended the rule of Buhari and Idiagbon. Babangida stepped aside on 25 August 1993, only to be replaced six months later by his former colleague, General Sani Abacha, who is now holding on tenaciously to power.

Throughout the period of military rule, but especially during the Buhari and Babangida eras, the soldiers projected themselves as powerful, benevolent leaders who were in power to 'restore law and order' and, above all, were themselves beyond the rule

of law. Every form of dissension was banned. In practice, the military (mis)rule was marked with ostentatious lifestyles and outrageous displays of wealth by the junta, escalation of corruption in national life, reckless embezzlement of public funds, nepotism, favouritism, patronage, godfatherism and an abysmally low morale among the general populace, the majority of whom were uneducated, unemployed and destitute. This is the sociopolitical climate against which *Minted Coins* is deployed.

Minted Coins provides ample illustration of how a striking central image—that of coins—can intensify meaning in poetry. The blurb on the dust-cover of the collection describes coins as 'the symbol of commerce, friendship and prosperity which also, like love, embody the gem of cheating, hatred, war and a litany of other vices'. Osofisan's aim is to play upon such associations in the poems, he probes the depths for signs of life and the figure of coins offers the poet a spectacle to make wide-ranging commentary on the nature of existence and living in Nigeria at a particular moment of great pressures on the economic, political and emotional life of the people. In their ceaseless movement across territories, passing from one hand to another through a complex range of deals, coins appropriately symbolise the flux of life, the inevitability of change, 'the meeting, parting and returning' that characterise living (p vii).

Although the tradition by which poets express their symphonic visions with vibrancy certainly has a long history that preceded modern African poets like Okigbo and Soyinka,⁴ these latter were the first Nigerian poets to develop dream into full ritualistic genres. The continuing echoes of *Labyrinths*, in particular, in Osofisan's poetry is a reflection of the powerful hold that Okigbo has on Osofisan's imagination. Okigbo's search to free himself from the restrictions of a polluted world, a world of daily strife, hate and frustration leads to a delving into Igbo religion and mythology, where he finds the female deity, mother Idoto, from whom Okigbo seeks both spiritual and artistic fulfilment. The union between private love and nationalism is in the agenda of Okigbo's modern verses, which culminate in the 'watermaid' sections of *Labyrinths* with Okigbo's casting of his verse in the grand lyric tradition to express his bittersweet experience of waiting for a loved one, the brief appearance of whom leaves the poet-protagonist in an agonised state of longing.⁵ Osofisan too makes forays into his tribal culture and incorporates the formal characteristics of Yoruba invocational and divinational poetry into his personal voice. In many respects, Osofisan reiterates the traditional role of the poet as the keeper of communal interests. As a figure who possesses the powers to intercede between his community and antagonistic forces, he carefully works out an aesthetic which forges a close relationship between his private universe and the community's fate, expressing his firm desire to cure wider societal ailments with the medicine of love.

Osofisan's ideal world is a setting in which humans and nature are in a state of harmonious relationship. In many of the poems he depicts a physical reality whose moral idealism approximates closely to that of Okot p' Bitek's tribal settings in his *Song of Lawino*.⁶ Osofisan states the case of an environment where:

By the women knitting slow songs
into their washing

by the lovers spraying the water
with whispered words

by the shy birds lending their voices
from the purdah of sleepy branches

by the hoes hiding from the weariness
of men returned from the farm

softly
on the sand
the moon
spreads his mat for the children to sit on.
(*'The moon and me'*, p 10)

It is the perfection of this ideal world that makes the despoliation of the earth by human a refusal of opportunities abundantly offered them to realise their potential happiness which pains the poet poignantly.

The images of pain and sorrow that dominate Osofisan's articulation of man-woman relationships bespeak the poet's genuine sadness over the painful dilemma in which humans are caught up. In the poem 'Fisherman' he uncovers some of the ambivalence that attend such relationships, and he captures the bittersweet tensions with mixed freedom and prison metaphors, as when the poet wonders aloud whether to regard his female partner 'as a liberation, a flag of freedom/ flung to the air' or a 'dungeon into which I tumbled, splashing/ for air...' (p 21). Since sensuality is an expression of the liberated state of man, the poet rejects the denial of it as an oppressive action of an authoritarian environment. His lady love 'whose presence/ rekindles an ancient ritual' (p 2), becomes a symbol of his native land, with whom the poet yearns to forge a lasting relationship.

The look of your eyes proclaim their depth
Deep like a lake of mystery, in whose
Dark a monster breathes:
But I laugh. I cast my net upon your waters
For only a crab fears the promise of drowning. (p 21)

In 'Queen', where Osofisan incarnates love as the union of imagination (memory) and reality (the present), the links between the self-indulgent and political interests of the poet are explored further.

He characterises love as a meeting between two lovers, 'a clapping of hands—startling/ velvet with the weight of joy' that brings 'love', 'an applause that enriches us...' (p 22). In this nostalgic evocation of a significant chance meeting of two lovers, Osofisan truly demonstrates that he is a poet whose forte is the reminiscence. He begins by describing 'Queen' as 'The diary of our meeting', of the moment when two lovers meet 'in the cold surprise of a harmattan season', where she emerges 'a tourist, bearing my curiosity/ in the camera of my longing, plus a pair of/ lanterns, a green smell of my eagerness/ and chiefly, my exploring hands...' (p 22). The attempt to give a composite picture of the lady's presence results in a model of woman worship:

You were the landscape from a faraway
land, and I knew you
first as one knows a painting:
an artist's creation, synthetic, a
masterpiece of hills and sea and cinema houses
(*'Queen'*, p 22)

The movement from the weary rhythm of the line 'you were ... land' to the breathless cadences of 'masterpiece of hills ... houses' helps anchor the identity of the woman: she is an overlap of images from Yoruba mythology and modern communications media, of art and life, of memory and desire, in short, a perfection of imaginative fantasy. By simultaneously stressing the evanescent qualities of the woman, Osofisan thus compels the reader to realise that the subject is not just a lady love but also the very symbol of creativity, his muse:

You brought me your youth, fragrant
 as a calabash of roasted crickets:
 I dipped my hand in, and
 my songs were the lavish spices
 I have tried to feed as one feeds from a queen.
 ('Queen', p 23)

When we examine Osofisan's romance with his lady closely, we soon realise how it is intertwined with his love of his fatherland which goes further than Okigbo's and assumes a pan-Africanist dimension.

Osofisan illustrates how a poet can celebrate love with an array of images which have many political associations. With 'Olokun (1)', for example, which Osofisan wrote by the shores of the River Gambia when he visited the neighbouring West African country from which the river took its name, the reader is afforded a rare opportunity to witness a display of fine flourishes typical of Osofisan's sensual involvement with the African landscape and the galaxy of people's myths and belief systems. There is a childlike quality to the poet's sense of self-surrender to the seascape, but also a distance as he addresses the object of his admiration through shifting voices. The opening lines of 'Olokun (1)' deserve to be quoted because they show the use of shifting voices that characterises the poem:

Your voice comes in tides of a great river
 Upon my silt of loneliness

I am an ancient land of colonial memories, my head
 is grey in the glass of noon

From the distance I spy you—you are the one
 tenderly bearing the petals of flags upon
 the long calyces of the great ships, till your skin
 melts with the ambre garden of sky. (p 14)

In the first two lines it is obviously the voice of the poet addressing Olokun, the Yoruba goddess of the sea, an eternal presence within a large body of water. But the next two lines present the voice of the landmass of the Gambia as a country addressing its major river. An 'ancient land of colonial memories' suggests the historical antiquity of the country. Then in the following four lines the voice of the poet returns, as it becomes mesmerised by the vision of the goddess.

Olokun is in general usage an image for beautiful girls and—like Clark in his earlier piece of the same title—as Osofisan celebrates her 'virgin waters' which are 'saltless/in the purity of your long pilgrimage/ from ancient mythologies and primal hills', it is clear that the poet views the river and the goddess who inhabits it as ageless creations, creatures who are also eternally worthy companions. Demonstrating that he is a poet whose love for his fatherland is so great that it is suffused with a jealous bent, he reveals another aspect of his personality. He gleefully gloats in 'Olokun (1)' over the number of men his lover has wounded by rejecting their advances while she reserves for him her special carnal favours:

Over there, desires are strong in your depths
 like a giant fish, prize of virile mariners

And how many dead navigators in the legend of
 your ceaseless courtship of the sands!

Oh in your ceaseless renaissance from sea to salt
 to storm, how many skeletons in the flotsam
 of your seasons... (p 14)

Showing that the granting of her sexual largesse is the more heroic because she is faithful to him, Osofisan expresses a heroic image of himself, the shattering of which at last will bring on him deep disillusionment:

Yet I do not wear away. I am an ancient voice in the clang of chains. I am patient and ancient. And I know. I know my history is. And will always be. (p 14)

Here the voice of the poet and his nation (the continent) merge; and the expression the clang of chains' carries a double entendre, since it refers simultaneously both to the tension of love in which the speaker as an individual is caught up with his lady love and the literal condition of Africa, a neocolonial set-up.

Osofisan's treatment of Africa continues to elaborate scenes of colonial conquest, and of economic exploitation (as when he speaks of the 'whitesmiths reforging it all in the furnace/ of the long harmattan' and of 'the architects' and 'the engineers/ scanning my catacombs and mineral chambers/ just for you...just for you only' (p 15), but he also sustains the tones of sexual conquest, extravagant boastfulness and physical pampering from the perspective of an individual lover.

For I am ancient. Wash me now as before. Wash along my shore. As many generations ago in the time of Ghana and Songhai. Wash me now as again, wash over me. (p 15)

In 'Love's Discotheque', another poem which has the same tone of brash, exuberant sensuality, the exploration becomes even more involved than 'Olokun (1)' and concentrates on the spiritual fulfilment that love brings. But in that exploration of wilful longing, woman worship and deep thoughts for the nation, Osofisan fulfils his poetic programme with the same dazzling verbal eloquence.

One of the themes of 'Love's Discotheque' relates to the poet's search for an overpowering love: a lady that must come to 'touch' the poet's 'salty voice/ And taste my songs like sugarcane/ into your heart' (p 17). The poem is remarkable for its imagery, as when the poet animates the union he longs for as a love force that 'will come so softly on paws/ of muffled music' that 'will open/ the doors of your shyness, till/ your love shall dance out, handsome/ As a handshake' (p 17). However, the major thematic concern of Osofisan is a reaching out for friendship and discovery of understanding among individuals in a manner to light up the entire society into a festive mood that will make 'the streets swollen/ with the songs' of his lover's passage' (p 20); hence he makes clear that the pursuit of the lady to 'forge' her into 'a song of dancing feet/ into love beats/ as drunken/ as a caterwauling deejay/ let loose on the 7th floor' is only meant to prepare a necessarily conducive environment for the national aspiration. Thus the throbbing of the dance is used as a metaphor for the flowering of love in society. Unfortunately, when the poet turns from dream to reality, the fatherland becomes more worthy of lament than celebration. In 'Olokun (2)' the poet had envisioned an ordered world where:

There will be children and
Then laughter in the rain
Where once the dry clamour
Of decrees. And leaves shall wear
The prestige of greenness. (p 28)

However, in contrast to the rich splendour the poet had looked forward to in society, he confronts disorder, corruption, inequality, injustice, brutality and animosity.

The harmonious union of the personal and public in the dominant concerns of Osofisan's poetry is evidence of Osofisan's abiding patriotic zeal: he continues to explore the predicament of contemporary Nigeria against the background of lost private dreams, using the medium of a musical language which is simple to the core. For

instance, in the poem wisely entitled 'Fidelity', he first casts his glimpse of the lost ideals in terms of a disastrous love affair. As the poet contemplates his sudden desertion by his lady love, he is overcome by the fear that she might have been claimed by the fat-living tycoons, corrupt politicians, jobbing merchants and contractors, and thieves:

Or may be you have long given up,
folded your dreams quietly
and gone home to wash;
may be you have renounced the storm
and walked into the salon
of banqueting thieves, and joined
the feast? perhaps
you have chosen a new role already
in this strange drama of Conquest,
in which our people
are always the defeated victims,
their ribs out and screaming,
when trusted leaders return from elections
to become marauders. (p 34)

The woman's former identity symbolises the poet's wasted vision for the nation, while her new husband represents the ascendancy of the new crimes like thuggery, deceit, violence, exploitation and selfishness. He especially fears that when he meets his former 'darling' again, 'I shall find/ only a stranger now, a queen superbly robed on a throne' (p 34).

The sociopolitical situation which the poet confronts, all around him is so tragic it makes his aspirations appear hyperbolic, lofty, and even exaggerated and unrealistic because in place of love, tyrants rule the land.

and the incessant threat of edicts
claw savagely into our faces
and decrees knock us like hoofbeats...

(for the keepers of
the national flag have torn it down
to sew their underwear) - -

and the struggle for living has become
a struggle among lunatics and
reptiles

in a jungle of terror. ('In these Times', p 30)

In fact, Osofisan depicts a society whose legal system is so bad

a young man can go
from an innocuous headline, straight
into a prison cell...
as justice acquired new meanings
and needed guns to stand on its feet. (p 39)

This poem, entitled 'For Thompson and Irabor', was composed on the occasion of the release from detention of two well-known Nigerian journalists, Tunde Thompson and Nduka Irabor, who were jailed for outspokenness against the repression perpetrated against the masses by the military dictatorship of General Buhari and Brigadier Idiagbon. It shows glaringly the sense of history we would expect from a committed poet when he surveys the Nigerian contemporary political scene. In it, Osofisan demonstrates the economic devastation of the lives of the underprivileged which had taken place. One

of the reasons, the poet warns the journalists against celebrating their regained 'freedom' prematurely is because they 'will come back/ different, and find the country/ different: no longer the one you left behind':

You will find the streets
clean, but empty of hope or dance;
the beggars gone, replaced
by the well-dressed unemployed;
where the old hawkers used to stand,
loud with their wares,
shoving imported plastics in your face,

You will arrive to find
new hawkers— women with wailing infants
on their backs (and watch out for their
fingernails, their fingernails:)
boys and girls aged beyond childhood by
their desperate looks; men made cunning
by the harsh realities of survival. (p 40)

According to Osofisan, Nigeria has become a society where 'the families [are] ravaged by retrenchment' and by 'our budget policies, our new thrift' and 'the same old barons' are behind 'the same old/ slogans, behind/ the same old censuses/ the same caucuses/ standing/ tall on the new soapboxes' ('I Remember Okigbo', p 49).

In *Minted Coins* Osofisan embarks on another patriotic programme: he takes the reader on a guided tour around the calamitous events in Nigeria's recent political history, and his aim is to sensitise the public against the atrocities of the leadership. Thus, in 'Blood season' his focus is on the unmitigated violence which the police and the military visited in 1986 on the students nationwide. He fixes his gaze on the atrocities, and bitterness and anger dominate the poem. For instance, the bloodbath is so frightening because, when the poet looks 'into the sunset' all he sees are 'the many mirrors of blood / several students dead, how many gods/ waiting to die' (p 37). As he laments the violence, the poet 'sold tears/ like the municipal/ water corporation, in/ tanks of profit'; he sees everywhere 'young corpses, where/ bullets flower/ and uniformed murderers turn/ to heroes' (p 37). The students are both the outspoken opponents of the violent repressions and the victims of the Nigerian injustices. Since the action of the students symbolised the hope for regeneration, by silencing them and their cry of hope the perpetrators of the ruthless injustices can go on with their dastardly behaviour. By detailing the prevailing culture of fear in the country, and by warning the returning journalists Thompson and Harbor not to regard their release from detention as representing an authentic liberation for their oppressed countrymen and women, Osofisan executes an effective plan to rouse the educated elite in general to the full intensity of suffering under a military dictatorship:

You will find your friends (including
me, Okinba) wise, strangely quiet now,
saying little, parting quickly,

Many of the hands shaking yours
will be trembling hands, like nerves
of fear Tunde; Nduka;
Welcome, but walk softly,
for there is a drought in the air,
like hidden snakes,
a rage of sand in a gathering gathering wind... (p 41)

The extended image of the political violence as a 'drought in the air/ like hidden snakes/

a rage of sand in a gathering gathering wind' furnishes proof of the grotesque viciousness of the authorities, which all lovers of freedom must unite to fight in a common cause.

The general history of Africa, which Osofisan revisits furnishes further proof of the ruthless persecution to which artists and thinkers are particularly prone under dictatorial circumstances. The current of deep anger and resentment that flows in the poet when he recalls the fate of Christopher Okigbo in 'I Remember Okigbo' and 'Like A Dead Clock Now', shows how Osofisan regards the eminent Nigerian poet who died in the Biafran war as a victim of social injustices. Other victims eulogised in 'Fodder' are Nelson Mandela (who was being suppressed by the Botha regime in South Africa); Ngugi (exiled by the Kenyan authorities from his country of birth); Ousmane and Diop (repressed at home by Senghor in Senegal); and the dramatist Amadu Maddy of Sierra Leone, who was having problems with the regime of the late Siakka Stevens.

the country eats them all
writers and poets
the country eats them all
farmers, workers
the bosses eat them all
dreamers, builders
contractors eat them all
patriots and poets
the traitors eat them all. (p 42)

The lilting melody and the recurring refrain in this song express the exasperated mood of the poet and also his determination to give popular expression to the people's anger in their mood of defiance. The vocabulary is simple, the rhythm memorable, and the anger is saturated. It is truly a moving poem which can rouse the oppressed to take up arms in a quest for liberation. In Nigeria words like 'bosses', 'contractors', and 'traitors' are not merely political catch slogans and clichés but suggest real human enemies against whom the poet is sensitising 'writers and poets', 'farmers', 'workers', 'dreamers' and 'builders', and 'patriots and poets'.

Despite the depth of social and political decay, Osofisan sees a ray of hope in the bleak atmosphere. In fact, he ventures that the salvation will come out of the arrest, exile and even execution of the artist/ thinkers. Thus, in 'I Remember Okigbo' and 'Like A Dead Clock Now', Osofisan views the death of the eminent poet both as a 'waste' and a consolation. Every time the politicians are at their old games of deceit there is 'a cacophony of/ numerous hammers/ as carpenters and contractors/ nail polling booths' and the poet thinks they are nailing Okigbo again 'as they once nailed a/ Christ.../ and many/ are the cannibal manifestos/ in the trembling air/ many the iron syllables/ that will kill you again Okigbo' ('I Remember Okigbo', pp 49-50). But Osofisan also views Okigbo's death with tender irony as an opportunity to represent African artists among the ancestral fathers, to whom ritual invocations can be made by the living to 'save us/ from the horror of/ naked thunderbeats and a/ thirst that shrivels/ our throats with lines of/ guilt; from desolation' ('Like a Dead Clock Now', p 51).

It has been noted that:

In view of the ominous breakdown in the religious machinery in Africa, writers, both in Africa and of Africa, have a tremendous responsibility laid upon them. Art to me is the technique of presenting unrealized and hidden values to people potentially capable of appreciating and understanding those values. It is a means by which men can penetrate places in their minds and souls they had never reached before. Writing especially can be a kind of magic mirror which holds up to man and society the neglected and unrealized aspects of himself and his age. (Laurens van der post, quoted in Obiechina 'Post-Independence')⁷

Many African writers have warmly accepted this responsibility of the intellectual class to be beacons of light in a neocolonial setting; so it is not surprising that Osofisan is one among their courageous number. He announces with *Minted Coins* that he is one of the most talented of the younger Nigerian poets who composes lyrics of a very high order, giving formal expression to the depressing social and political problems of his day. He gives substantial support to the advocates of oral forms in modern poetry and his experimentations help reshape the tradition of lyric poetry he inherited from Okigbo. He is able to look beyond the forces of corruption, greed, avarice, intolerance and villainy threatening to shatter the Nigerian nation to reveal a vision of higher ideals using a language that is characterised by mellowness, simplicity, and accessibility, indicative of a fertile imagination. Within this context, the piece 'War's Aftermath', one of the last poems in the collection, is particularly interesting for the vision it reveals. In it, Osofisan takes an imaginative leap into the future of his country after the sociopolitical débacle and sees:

... palm-trees shaking their hair
above us, for that tree
at the crossroads, pelting the earth
with almonds...

These forests where the earth has grown
green in the ardour of
creepers, so that rainfall after carrion
a locust season
May draw fresh wings on the statement of dawn.
that my roads may meet where the fruits fall.
(pp 65-66)

In another, 'New Season', he speaks with comparable gusto about the new dawn of hope when he enthuses:

I hear the fields shake out their hair
shout as with laughter.
I know the farmer
has left despair to the hoe
and the blacksmith at the forge,
he has left desolation to the bellows.
Look; the palmtree wears a
necklace of kernels. I with my
kinsmen, we shall eat
the first male yams of the season.
Maize, owner of goodluck,
dances to the many-fingered applause
of his children. (p 69)

These verses, which employ homely images that are rooted in the fauna and flora of the poet, reaffirm his underlying moral world view about the inevitability of change in human life. Because of the vision of love, charity and friendship he projects and the adroitness with which Osofisan employs many poetic devices to dramatise his vision, his poetry has much appeal; and yet whether his country will witness the fulfilment the poet craves in his own day, a life of relative abundance, justice and equality for the entire citizenry, is a matter that only the future can tell.

Notes

- ¹ Okinba Launko, *Minted Coins*, Ibadan: Heinemann, 1987. All page references in the body of the essay are from this edition.
- ² Chris Dunton, *Make Man Talk True: Nigerian Drama in English since 1970*, London: Hans Zell, 1992, p. 67.
- ³ See Christopher Okigbo, *Labyrinths with Paths of Thunder*, London: Heinemann, 1971; J P Clark, *A Reed in the Tide*, London: Longman, 1965; Gabriel Okara, *The Fisherman's Invocation*, Benin: Ethiope Publishing Corporation, 1978; Wole Soyinka, *Idanre and other Poems*, London: Methuen, 1967; and M J C Echeruo, *Mortality*, London: Longman, 1968.
- ⁴ I refer in particular to Soyinka's early verse of *Idanre and other Poems*. His poetry has of course developed in other directions over the years but the lyrical temper remains constant, as Charles Bodunde has demonstrated in a recent essay, 'Tributes, censures and transitions: Soyinka's *Mandela and other poems*', *Wasafiri*, 14, 1991, pp 2-6.
- ⁵ Chris Dunton notes in *Make Man Talk True* how, in his early iconoclastic survey of contemporary Nigerian English language poetry, published in the now defunct *News Magazine Afriscope* in 1974, Osolisan 'dismisses the work of a whole number of poets, while invoking Okigbo as a poet he greatly admires' (p. 167).
- ⁶ Okot P'Bitek, *Song of Lawino*, Nairobi: East Africa Publishing Bureau, 1966.
- ⁷ Emmanuel Obiechina, 'Post-Independence disillusionment in three African novels', in Bernth Lindfors & Ulla Schild (eds), *Neo-African Literature and Culture: Essays in Memory of Jahnemz Jahn*, Wiesbaden: B. Beyman Verlag, 1976, p. 137. For criticism of Obiechina's application of these insights to some selected novels of Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe and Ayi Kwei Armah, see my forthcoming article 'Achebe and Armah: a unity of shaping visions', *Research in African Literatures*, 27 (2), 1996.

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Pluralising global governance: analytical approaches and dimensions

LEON GORDENKER & THOMAS G WEISS

Nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) have in increasing numbers injected unexpected voices into international discourse about numerous problems of global scope. Especially during the last 20 years, human rights advocates, gender activists, developmentalists, groups of indigenous peoples and representatives of other defined interests have become active in political work once reserved for representatives of states. Their numbers have enlarged the venerable, but hardly numerous, ranks of transnational organisations built around churches, labour unions and humanitarian aims.

The United Nations (UN) system provides a convenient, accessible vantage point to observe some of the most active, persuasive NGOs in the world. During the last 50 years, various UN organisations have felt the direct and indirect impact of NGOs. According to the Union of International Associations, the NGO universe includes well over 15 000 recognisable NGOs that operate in three or more countries and draw their finances from sources in more than one country; this number is growing all the time.¹ In their own ways, NGOs and intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) grope, sometimes cooperatively, sometimes competitively, sometimes in parallel towards a modicum of 'global governance'. We define global governance as efforts to bring more orderly and reliable responses to social and political issues that go beyond capacities of states to address individually. Like the NGO universe, global governance implies an absence of central authority, and the need for collaboration or cooperation among governments and others who seek to encourage common practices and goals in addressing global issues. The means to achieve global governance also include activities of the United Nations and other intergovernmental organisations and standing cooperative arrangements among states.

This introductory essay generally discusses the NGO phenomenon. It proposes a definition of NGOs to serve for the purpose of this issue, although much controversy remains about the concept and individual authors may offer refinements. It also provides a general backdrop of historical, legal and political factors for the study. It offers some analytical detail needed for deeper understanding of the phenomenon, and outlines a set of fundamental factors for studying NGOs. It does not assume that NGOs always or even usually succeed in reaching their goals or, if they do, that the result is beneficial for peace, social or personal welfare, or human rights.

The studies that follow all employ the United Nations as a central and reasonably transparent point of observation that has legal and historical underpinnings, and branching activities that reach to the social grass roots. Moreover, NGOs are omnipresent in many aspects of international relations, and they may

have become crucial to the UN's future. It is significant that in its essay, 'Reforming the United Nations', the Commission on Global Governance—whose members are virtually all former governmental officials or international civil servants—examined NGOs and observed that 'in their wide variety they bring expertise, commitment, and grassroots perceptions that should be mobilized in the interests of better governance'.² NGOs assume centre stage for activities that once 'were irrelevant to the overall plot'.³ The case studies, each written by an author who has directly observed or experienced NGO activities, examine NGO work on human rights, complex humanitarian emergencies, the United Nations relationship, the global environment, AIDS, the international women's movement, scaling up and scaling down, operational coalitions and state relations. The final essay draws on the specific studies to reach conclusions about the nature, function and prospects for NGOs in relation to the UN system.

The phenomenon

In spite of the growth of the NGO phenomenon, confusion or ignorance persists as to the definition of the participants and the nature of their relationships to the UN system and to one another. Theoretical explorations have tended to be few in number and specific to a particular sector of activity, especially aspects of economic and social development and of the environment. A considerable body of writing has a primarily legal character, which overlooks or understates the richness of NGO activity and politics. Definitional clarity connects closely with concepts of structure, organisation and institutionalisation.

The very site of NGO activity under examination here suggests paradoxes. IGOS join with governments in common undertakings. By definition, NGOs have no formal standing in this realm. Yet they have become exponentially more visible precisely in connection with governments. IGOS were intended to serve governments and to assist in cooperatively reaching goals on which both generally agree. Yet NGOs have now become an integral part of the process of setting agendas for cooperation and in carrying the results not only to governments but to other NGOs and individuals. This study seeks to analyse this process, which requires examining both broad and deep interorganisational relationships.

The term 'nongovernmental organisation' itself is challenged by a host of alternative usages. These include officials, independent sector, volunteer sector, civic society, grassroots organisations, private voluntary organisations, transnational social movement organisations, grassroots social change organisations and non-state actors. Some of these refer to highly specialised varieties and many are synonyms for each other. There seems no quarrel, however, with the notion that these organisations consist of durable, bounded, voluntary relationships among individuals to produce a particular product, using specific techniques. Like-minded organisations may analogously develop lasting relationships to one another and thus form meta-organisations.

Although the term 'non-state actors' may more closely resemble our inclusion of several varieties of meta-organisations that are engaged in transnational relationships, we maintain the term 'nongovernmental organisations' because of its common currency and because this is the term that appears in article 71 of

he UN Charter. At the same time, 'non-state actors', according to a Lexis-Nexis search, connotes a host of transnational entities that we deliberately exclude from our inquiry. These include profit-making corporations and banks, criminal elements (both organised crime and terrorists), insurgents, churches in their strictly religious function, transnational political parties and the mass communication media.

A metaphor suggested by Marc Nerfin provides a starting point for locating NGOs in the political realm: the prince represents governmental power and the maintenance of public order; the merchant symbolises economic power and the production of goods and services; and the citizen stands for people's power.⁴ As such, the growth of NGOs arises from demands by citizens for accountability from the prince and the merchant. In this perspective, NGOs compete and cooperate with the prince and the merchant for guidance in aspects of social life. They function to 'serve undeserved or neglected populations, to expand the freedom of or to empower people, to engage in advocacy for social change, and to provide services'.⁵

Such an approach contains much that is subjective. Citizens may believe themselves under-served by, or deprived of, rightful power, or they may seek more freedom and advocate change. Doing so implies reform or drastic changes in existing societies. Yet it is equally conceivable that citizens could demand preservation of the status quo as part of the accountability of merchants and princes. The objective point of such approaches, however, lies in the identification of organisation and activity beyond the conventional categories of state and business.

Questions can be raised about the accuracy of this metaphor. Although recognising the legitimacy of each sector of society, it tends to glorify NGOs at the expense of states and markets. NGO 'citizens' are portrayed as vanguards of the just society, as 'princes' and 'merchants' strive to dominate or to make profits. In a study of environmental NGOs in world politics, two authors concluded that the crucial function of NGOs was to create transnational links between state and non-state. NGOs, in this model, politicise the previously unpoliticised and connect the local and the global.⁶

Some NGOs do, in fact, politicise issues otherwise regarded by some as part of the nonpolitical realm, AIDS being a recent case in point. They also bring local experience to bear on international decision making. This may be the most important contribution NGOs have made to global governance. Once again, however, generalisation is dangerous because some NGOs continue to lead a more marginal existence, without links to international bodies. Most NGOs have not managed to break out of the local setting and become engaged in transnational activities.

If NGOs exist and operate above and beneath the level of government, they parallel the pattern of IGOs, particularly those of the UN system. These entities, too, are intended to operate to some degree beyond the states that form them. IGOs do not govern; they attempt to cope with and help manage complex interrelationships and global political, economic and social changes by arranging cooperation of other actors, especially governments. In doing so, they have also

extended their operations below the classical boundaries of governmental autonomy.

Distinctions between IGOs and NGOs rest on legal grounds and tend to exaggerate the boundary between the two categories. In reality, there are great variations within, and unclear borderlines between, the two categories. The sheer number of different types of NGOs, ranging from community-based self-help groups to international NGOs with staff and budgets surpassing those of many IGOs, calls for conceptual differentiation and clarification.

Students of international relations have proposed alternative terminologies to conceptualise transnational relations. James Rosenau, for instance, distinguishes between sovereignty-bound and sovereignty-free actors.⁷ While sociological rather than legal, this dichotomy can also be misleading insofar as organisations composed of governments are automatically assumed to be sovereignty-bound and other actors sovereignty-free. Perhaps it would make more sense to speak of sovereignty-bound and sovereignty-free behaviour.⁸ Regardless of their legal status, organisations may engage in behaviour that is guided by, or pays heed to, state sovereignty to varying degrees. Loyalties do not always follow state borders, and secretariats of IGOs are not necessarily more dominated than secretariats of big NGOs.

This essay and this journal issue retain the traditional IGO-NGO distinction for lack of better alternatives, while remaining attentive to sovereignty-bound and sovereignty-free behaviour by IGOs and NGOs alike. The important puzzle is what specific roles NGOs may play in transnational networks as intermediary organisations that provide links between state and market, between local and global levels.

The challenges to sovereignty, according to a recent analytical study, include four categories of interdependence—trade and finance, security, technology and ecological problems—and ‘the emergence of new social movements with both local and transnational consciousness’.⁹ Both NGOs and IGOs, then, busy themselves with the paradox of global economic and technological integration with local fragmentation of identities.

Apart from the function of representing people acting of their own volition, rather than by some institutional *fiat*, NGOs have other defining characteristics. They are formal organisations that are intended to continue in existence; they are thus not *ad hoc* entities. They are or aspire to be self-governing on the basis of their own constitutional arrangements. They are private in that they are separate from governments and have no ability to direct societies or to require support from them. They are not in the business of making or distributing profits. The NGOs of interest here have transnational goals, operations or connections, and have active contacts with the UN system.

Not every organisation that claims to be an NGO exactly fits this definition of a private citizens’ organisation, separate from government but active on social issues, not profit making, and with transnational scope. At least three significant deviations from these specifications can be identified. The first of these is a GONGO—government-organised nongovernmental organisation. They achieved notoriety during the Cold War because many so-called NGOs owed their very existence and entire financial support to communist governments in the Soviet

bloc or authoritarian ones in the Third World. There were also a few such 'NGOs' in the West, particularly in the USA, where they were often a front for administration activities. Although the Western species may have been more nongovernmental than their Soviet or Third World counterparts, they were not created for the classic purposes of NGOs. Thus, GONGOS can be treated as only tangential to our examination.

The second special type of NGO is QUANGOS (quasi-nongovernmental organisations). For example, many Nordic and Canadian NGOs, a handful of US ones, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) receive the bulk of their resources from public coffers. The staffs of such organisations usually assert that as long as their financial support is without strings attached and their own priorities rather than those of donor governments dominate, there is no genuine problem. This is clearly a subjective judgment, but most of these NGOs are relevant for our discussion. Their services aim at internationally-endorsed objectives and their operations are distinct from those of governments, even if their funding is public.

We are at an early stage in understanding how NGOs adapt to changing external and internal environments. In examining recent trends at the domestic level in the USA and Britain, one analyst has gone so far as to call into question voluntary agencies as a 'shadow state'.¹⁰ With more governmental and intergovernmental resources being channelled through international NGOs, the issue of independence—or a willingness to bite the hand that feeds in order to make autonomous programmatic decisions in spite of donor pressures—assumes greater salience. 'One of the real issues for NGOs is how much money can they take from the government while still carrying out advocacy activities that may involve criticizing the source of those funds'.¹¹

The third mutant type—the donor-organised NGO (DONGO)—is also distinguished by its source of funds. 'As donors become more interested in NGOs, they also find themselves tempted to create NGOs suited to their perceived needs'.¹² Both governments and the UN system have 'their' NGOs for particular operations and purposes. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has been involved in fostering their growth for a decade. The UN itself created local NGOs that contributed to mobilising the population for elections in Cambodia¹³ and to de-mining in Afghanistan.¹⁴

QUANGOS and DONGOS fit well enough in the general definition to warrant inclusion in this study. They aim at internationally-endorsed purposes and have a private status, even if their funding is public. They offer services that clearly fall within the usual range of NGO operations.

Relationship to the UN

A conventional, legally-based way of describing NGOs and their relationship to the United Nations begins with the formal structure that derives from UN Charter article 71.¹⁵ It empowers the Economic and Social Council (ESOSOC) to 'make suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within its competence'. It is the only mention of NGOs in the Charter, largely an afterthought stimulated by the Soviet

Union's attempt to put a GONGO on a par with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), another IGO dating to the formation of the League of Nations that constitutionally included representation of labour and management in its governing structure.¹⁶ Early attempts to give meaning to article 71 were heavily coloured by cold-war manoeuvres, but a growing list of organisations with consultative status developed around fairly restricted practices laid down by ESOSOC.¹⁷ Historically speaking, the UN Charter formalises the relationship between NGOs and the world organisation in a significantly different way from the previous experience with international organisation. For example, NGOs were completely excluded from the Hague Conferences in 1899 and 1907. At the League of Nations, NGOs achieved only an informal consultative arrangement that had some effect, however, on proceedings there.¹⁸

The present legal framework dates from 1968 in the form of the elaborate ESOSOC Resolution 1296 (XLIV). It is now undergoing reexamination in a stately process whose diplomatic tone is heavily coloured by NGO participation. Resolution 1296 retains but refines the earlier UN principle that any international organisation not established by intergovernmental agreement falls into the NGO category. In 11 paragraphs of principles, the text emphasises that NGOs that seek consultative status must have goals within the UN economic and social ambit. These NGOs must also have a representative and international character, and authorisation to speak for members who are supposed to participate in a democratic fashion. The text requires submission of data from organisations on their budgets and the sources of their financing. It also promotes a vague hierarchy by encouraging the formation of umbrella organisations composed of organisations with similar purposes that pool their advice to the council and transmit results of consultations from national organisations. The process of admission to consultative status is supervised by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, elected each year by ESOSOC from among its member governments, 19 of which provide the actual personnel.

Consultations remain largely under ESOSOC control, in contrast to the fuller rights of participation available to IGOs in the UN system. NGOs can be granted status in one of three categories, designated as 'I', 'II', and 'the roster'. Those in category I are supposed to have broad economic and social interests and geographical scope; those in category II have more specialised interests. The remainder of accepted applicants are listed in a roster for organisations that may make occasional contributions. Category I organisations have the broadest access to the council. They may propose ESOSOC agenda items to the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, which in turn can ask the secretary-general to include their suggestions on the provisional list. This is far from a right to submit agenda items. Like category II NGOs, category I organisations may send observers to all meetings and may submit brief written statements on their subject matter. The council has the right to ask for written statements from any of the consultative NGOs, and it may invite category I and II organisations to hearings, which, in fact, are rare. Other rules set out limitations on NGOs in dealing with ESOSOC subsidiaries and international conferences summoned by it.

The UN Department of Public Information simultaneously developed a

parallel set of relationships with NGOs under its own legislative authority.¹⁹ This emphasises the information-disseminating function of NGOs, rather than any input in policy formation. It includes briefings, mailings, access to documentation and an NGO Resources Center in New York.²⁰

Both of these consultative arrangements gave birth to meta-organisations representing NGOs. Some of those in contact with ESOSOC soon formed a Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status, which adopted the acronym CONGO. It takes no substantive positions, but concentrates on procedural matters and the promotion of better understanding of the ESOSOC agenda. For the organisations in the public information orbit, an NGO/Department of Public Information (DPI) Executive Committee serves as liaison.²¹

These consultative arrangements signal the presence of two trends. One of them indicates the almost unprecedented establishment of 'formal relations between "interest" groups and an intergovernmental body'.²² Even though this relationship was conditioned by the Cold War, both in the formation of the list of accredited organisations and the attention given them by the largely diplomatic ESOSOC, it offered some access to the UN system by NGOs. The fact that this access was seen as worthwhile by NGOs may be inferred from the growth in category I listings from seven in 1948 to 41 in 1991, and in category II organisations from 32 to 354 during the same period, while an even faster expansion took place on the roster.²³

The other trend looks towards the vast broadening of scope and reach of the programmes reviewed in ESOSOC. Although this organ by itself has never achieved the influence implied by its place in the UN Charter,²⁴ reports submitted from elsewhere in the system make it a central source of documentation and information. Senior officers of other IGOS also appear as authors, and those related to ESOSOC in the UN system make statements. The subject matter covers not only old-style international cooperation, but also takes in new subjects such as the environment, an enlarged operation to succour refugees and disaster victims, and a variegated web of economic and social development projects.²⁵

Furthermore, the ESOSOC machinery and the international secretariats that serve it are intimately involved in the organisation of large-scale international conferences on special themes, such as population, the status of women and the environment. Such gatherings, in which governments are represented by senior officials, attract heavy NGO interest. The UN Conference on the Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, for example, registered 1 400 NGO representatives who formally participated in a Global Forum and informally did their best as lobbyists. Only a minority of these NGOs had official consultative status with ESOSOC.

Consequently, over the years ever more officials and members of NGOs have come into contact with UN affairs or see some reason to seek such connections. In addition, the formation of NGO alliances and coalitions among them—the UN has picked up social science jargon and calls them 'networks'—has become a routine response to activities in the UN system.²⁶

A salient phenomenon

Evidence of an NGO presence around the IGOs of the UN system alone hardly demonstrates what the Club of Rome has called 'the barefoot revolution' and the Worldwatch Institute has called 'people power'.²⁷ Instead, both external and internal factors can be cited in what has become a salient phenomenon in international policy making and execution.

End of the Cold War

The first and perhaps most important explanation of NGO expansion is the end of the Cold War. With the breakdown of ideological and social orthodoxy, the reluctance of many, perhaps most, diplomats and UN practitioners to interact with nongovernmental staff evaporated. This has opened new possibilities of communication and cooperation within decision-making processes. With the waning of East-West tensions, the United Nations has become a better forum for the reconciliation of views among governments on the old geopolitical compass of North-South-East-West. The UN also has become an obvious forum for discussions between governments and NGOs. 'Before it was not possible to have any contact with nongovernmental organizations in the Soviet Union, for example, because this would be seen as neo-imperialist intervention', said UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. 'On the other side, it was called communist intervention'.²⁸

The explanation goes beyond procedures. Issues recognised in the revealing light of the post-Cold War world as extending beyond and below state borders also needed and demanded the strengths of NGOs. As part of a major reappraisal of the role of the state and of alternative ways to solve problems, NGOs are emerging as a special set of organisations that are private in their form but public in their purpose.²⁹ The environment, grassroots development, more equitable trade relations, human rights and women's issues had been on NGO agendas throughout the last two or three decades. But now they have assumed new vitality. Additional pressures for NGO involvement grew around such new issues as investment needs of the erstwhile socialist bloc and ethnonationalism, with its accompanying flood of refugees and internally displaced persons. These issues simply could not be addressed solely through intergovernmental operations and recommendations characteristic of the United Nations.³⁰

Moreover, when high politics and security, particularly over nuclear issues, dominated the international agenda, NGOs were at a comparative disadvantage. They obviously had no weapons and only limited access to people wielding decision-making power. As low politics rose on the international agenda, NGOs that had promoted relevant policies and actions energetically exploited or expanded direct access to policymakers. For example, NGOs not only have a capacity for direct action but they may also bring advanced knowledge to bear on such issues as gender, the environment, AIDS, relief assistance, human rights and community development.

Technological developments

Technological developments represent a second explanation for the increasing salience of NGOs in UN activity. '[New] technologies increasingly render information barriers either ineffective or economically infeasible'.³¹ Governments that are hostile to NGOs fail in their sometimes zealous efforts to prevent information flows, interaction and networking through the Internet and fax communications. Electronic means have literally made it possible to ignore borders and to create the kinds of communities based on common values and objectives that were once almost the exclusive prerogative of nationalism.³²

Modern communications technology is independent of territory. 'By providing institutional homes in the same way that states have accommodated nationalism', one observer suggests, 'NGOs are the inevitable beneficiaries of the emergence of the new global communities'.³³ Consequently, global social change organisations (GSCOs), another study claims, 'may represent a unique social invention of the postmodern, postindustrial, ie information-rich and service-focused, globally-linked world system'.³⁴

Growing resources

A third explanatory factor can be found in the growing resources and professionalism of NGOs. Both indigenous and transnational NGOs have recently attracted additional resources from individual donors, governments and the UN system. In 1994 over 10% of public development aid (\$8 billion) was channelled through NGOs, surpassing the volume of the combined UN system (\$6 billion) without the Washington-based financial institutions. About 25% of US assistance is channelled through NGOs; at the Social Summit in Copenhagen, Vice-President Al Gore committed Washington to increasing this figure to 50% by the turn of the century.³⁵ Western governments have increasingly turned towards NGO projects on the basis of a reputation for cost-effectiveness.

This trend fits well with the progressively declining funds for foreign assistance and generally with domestic pressures in donor countries to cut back on overseas commitments. In fact, two prominent analysts have recently written: 'The increase of donor-funded NGO relief operations and Western disengagement from poor countries are two sides of the same coin'.³⁶

Interorganisational relations in the NGO realm

Networking is perhaps a cliché in the lexicon of transnational organisation, but it aptly points to a key function of many NGOs: the process of creating bonds, sometimes formal but primarily informal, among like-minded individuals and groups across state boundaries. New communications technologies are helping to foster the kinds of interaction and relationships that were once unthinkable except through expensive air travel. Scaling up certain kinds of transnational efforts from neighbourhoods and regions to the global level and scaling down to involve grassroots organisations are no longer logistic impossibilities, but may be treated as institutional imperatives.

Claims about NGOs' eclipsing the role of the state are exaggerated, but significant change is nonetheless taking place regarding their weight in world politics. NGOs may 'create conditions that facilitate the formation of international institutions' and 'reinforce the norms promoted by these institutions through public education as well as through organized attempts to hold states accountable to these, and enhance institutional effectiveness by reducing the implementation costs associated with international institutions'. Moreover, the potential for enhanced networking increases the 'capacity to monitor states' compliance with international agreements, promote institutional adaptation and innovation, and challenge failed institutions'.³⁷

NGOs that have relations with IGOS go far beyond the officially-sanctioned diplomatic networks and the narrowly-defined contacts implied by a legalistic approach. NGOs are based upon interpersonal ties and relationships among people with similar convictions, goals and interests. The result is a web of personal connections that do not fit within a formal, legal framework.

NGOs employ a variety of devices to increase the persuasiveness and efficiency of their work in conjunction with IGOS. Some of these have formal structures, while others rely primarily on interpersonal relationships. Some are constructed for service with only one UN organisation, while others have a more general scope across the UN system. Four types of interorganisational devices that involve NGOs—formal bridging groups, federations, UN coordinating bureaux and connections to governments—can be identified. Aside from these fairly defined structures, many NGOs coordinate their activities with others for a specific issue or within a particular geographical area. These occurrences may be formal but are probably usually informal and may last only briefly. There is a variety of mechanisms for NGOs to relate collectively to the UN system. Probably the best known coordination mechanisms are represented by the World Bank within its own investment or aid projects, or by the United Nations Development Program within a country-wide framework. Many NGOs coordinate their own activities for a specific issue or within a particular geographical area through formal coalitions and these, too, should be considered in understanding NGOs and the United Nations.

Some NGOs have a long institutional history or are part of federations of the organisations that they represent. Others get together only for particular issues for short periods. In either form, NGO coalitions seek to represent the views of their constituent members and to pursue shared goals. Examples would be the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) in Geneva, originally for European NGOs but now composed primarily of Third World ones; Inter-Action in Washington, DC for US-based NGOs; or a gathering of the various Oxfams or country chapters of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF). Within a recipient country where UN organisations operate, there sometimes exist umbrella groups for indigenous NGOs—for example, Coordinación in Guatemala facilitates contacts between external donors and local groups working with uprooted populations. Within a region there can also exist a similar pooling of efforts—for example, Concertación links development NGOs in five Central American countries.

Formal coalitions of NGOs

A main function of formal coalitions of NGOs is to develop as far as possible or to harmonise common positions for issues. Some examples are the lobbying efforts within the United States for the extension of Public Law 480, the source of foodstuffs for relief and development; or the search for a common stance by women's groups for international conferences on human rights in Vienna and on population in Cairo. Concrete examples include an invitation to ICVA to address the Executive Committee of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and a request to EarthAction (one of the largest global NGO networks with over 700 member associations in about 125 countries) to put forward views to the Commission on Global Governance.

These formal coalitions may attempt headquarters-level coordination of activities within a certain region or in relationship to a specific crisis, as for example, Somalia and Rwanda. Member NGOs of formal groups are not, however, bound by organisational decisions, and dissenters are free to follow their own counsel or take individual positions on policies of IGOS.

'Bridging organisations', created for service in developing countries, seek on one hand to create both horizontal links across economic and social sectors and vertical links between grassroots organisations and governments. On the other hand, they try to form similar links to external donors, whether governmental, intergovernmental or nongovernmental.

Constituent NGOs working in different sectors can interact in these bridging organisations that furnish what otherwise would be absent—a forum for discussion and cooperation. As a consequence, grassroots groups get a voice and attempt to influence policy-making. Bridging organisations function as a conduit for ideas and innovations, a source of information, a broker of resources, a negotiator of deals, a conceptualiser of strategies and a mediator of conflicts. Such organisation, it is argued, helps lead to sustainable development.³⁸ Examples of such bridging organisations include the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC Asia), the Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), Savings Development Movement (SDM, Zimbabwe), and the Urban Popular Movement and the Coalition of Earthquake Victims (MUP and CUD, Mexico City).

Relief operations, and to a lesser extent development efforts, have drawn together in-country consortia of local and international NGOs with the support of donors. These groupings are often shaped to accommodate a division of labour for a geographical region or for a function like transport.³⁹ The Khartoum-based Emergency Relief Desk, for example, was backed by a number of European religious NGOs and then reorganised and adapted to help crossborder operations into Eritrea and Tigray.⁴⁰ In the southern Sudan, the combined Agency Relief Team was established in the mid-1980s as a relief transport consortium.⁴¹

Transnational federations of NGOs

Save the Children, Oxfam, Amnesty International, MSF, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and CARE are examples of

large NGOs with a global scope and autonomous chapters in individual countries. Organisational members of a federation share an overall image and ideology. For example, Oxfam's ideology sets out a grassroots development orientation that all its national affiliates employ. But the national groups are responsible for their own fundraising and projects. Although members of such federations meet periodically at both the management and working levels to discuss common problems, each national member maintains autonomy.

Federations of NGOs try to, and frequently do, present a united front on the policies that they advocate in NGOs and in their field operations. Yet this is not always possible because of differences in view and leadership styles, and the needs in respective country branch offices and headquarters. Federations differ in how much control they can exert over their branches and how much branch activity can be coordinated with worldwide partners as well as how they finance administrative costs for common activities.

For example, Save the Children US has limited coordination with its European partners, and there is little consensus about how to address this rift. Save the Children UK does not necessarily wish to increase coordination, but the US headquarters seeks to increase interaction to improve cost-effectiveness. Also, some Save the Children branches and projects have different emphases and agendas. For example, Save the Children Sweden acts as a sort of amnesty international for children, focusing on child abuse and child advocacy to a greater extent than other chapters do.

Large federations with headquarters and many branches face the tension of accountability versus autonomy and independent action by their many satellites. Friction rises when branch offices stray from a supposedly common vision of a federation or engage in controversial or unprofessional activities. These could have negative repercussions for other chapters. At the same time, imposing constraints on branch offices may be impossible and may risk sacrificing independent and innovative thinking and acting.

UN coordination of NGOs

In contrast to the conventional Roman wisdom of divide and conquer, UN officials concerned about the proliferation of nongovernmental entities have responded with the attitude: 'If you can't beat 'em, organize 'em'. The efforts by the World Bank, UNHCR and the UNDP to structure project relationships are probably the best known.⁴² UN organisations vary not only in how they coordinate their activities with NGOs but also in the extent to which they work with NGOs in the first place. When no formal structures for coordination exist, cooperation often proceeds on a case-by-case basis. Even with the existence of formal mechanisms, coordination is often *ad hoc*, based on individual relationships. Especially in crises, coordination may occur spontaneously. Nevertheless, NGOs are notorious for their independence; coordinating NGOs is 'like herding cats', according to one UN official.

Cooperation is not cost-free for NGOs. From a logical management perspective, for example, the current systems for development cooperation or humanitarian action have too many moving parts.⁴³ Greater collaboration among the various

agencies would appear at first glance to be helpful in limiting random activity, overlap and duplication. Yet, assuming it could be arranged, even improved coordination may involve significant opportunity costs for NGOs in terms of use of personnel, resources or even diminished credibility because of their association with the United Nations. There is no guarantee of greater effectiveness or savings. As James Ingram, the former executive director of the World Food Programme (WFP), has written: 'The appearance of improved coordination at the center is not necessarily a factor in more effective and timely interventions in the field'.⁴⁴ Hence, formal UN-led efforts at coordination, comprehensive or not, are not viewed by NGO leaders as always desirable.

Such coordinating bodies in fact have a mixed record for viability and effectiveness. They have often struggled to find funding, a task that is more than a mere forum for endless NGO meetings.⁴⁵ If the main concern is effectiveness, then both formal and informal coordinating should be able to increase contact and collaboration among NGOs (exchange ideas and information); provide genuine services to members; improve liaison with governments and the UN system; and increase resources available for NGOs.

An intriguing question arises as to why certain operational IGOS—observers point to UNICEF and UNHCR—cooperate easily with NGOs while others experience considerably more difficulty. The structures, charters and goals of these UN organisations play a part, but more intangible elements such as organisational culture are among the plausible explanations.

A significant number of staff in both UNICEF and UNHCR have themselves worked in NGOs and appreciate their strengths and weaknesses. The rough-and-ready, roll-up-the-sleeves approach to disasters also makes cooperation seem more necessary and sensible than in other contexts, where the lack of an emergency permits more time and leisure for turf battles.

On a more political level, one possible explanation for easy cooperation is complementary tasks. For example, in election monitoring within UN-orchestrated operations in El Salvador and Cambodia, NGOs could more easily make public pronouncements about irregularities than could the civilian or military staff of the UN Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) and the UN Transition Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). In such circumstances, rather than rivalry, a sensible division of labour appeared between NGOs and IGOS. For some of the same reasons, discernible complementarity has developed between Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch and the United Nations. Because NGOs can push harder and more openly for more drastic changes, which can then be codified over time by the UN, a 'symbiotic' relationship has developed in the context of establishing new human rights standards and implementing existing ones.⁴⁶

Some participants view the coordination effort launched in the early 1990s by UNHCR and ICVA as promising. It is titled PAR in AC (Partners in Action) and is intended to 'enhance dialogue and understanding between UNHCR; to facilitate closer collaboration and increase the combined capacity to respond to the global refugee problem and ... the problem of internal displacement'. PAR in AC aims to 'enhance and improve future NGO/UNHCR collaboration', and is motivated by UNHCR's belief that NGOs have a 'community-based approach [that] is an asset in

bridging the gap between relief and development'.⁴⁷ Behind the official language lies the intense field experience of Bosnia and elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia and northern Iraq as well as the belief among some leading participants that earlier contact mechanisms delivered less than was hoped.

NGOs and governments

The relationships between governments and NGOs take several forms. Some of these are adversarial, as certain NGOs criticise and hope to change governmental policies. Other relationships are cooperative and businesslike. Host governments regulate activities by NGOs through domestic legislation and activities of international NGOs by administrative procedures (for example, visas and foreign exchange procedures). Donor governments hire NGOs to implement projects and sign contracts subject to national legislation. NGOs may lobby governments for altruistic reasons, such as new international agreements and policies, and for more self-serving reasons, such as increased budgetary allocations for their own work. In the process, they must abide by national regulations governing such activity. In some extraordinary situations, NGOs have provided services to citizens that are normally expected from governments. For example, the primary education system in the north of Sri Lanka was coordinated largely by NGOs after the government system collapsed following the onset of civil war in 1987; and the Bangladesh Rural Action Committee (BRAC) is responsible for 35 000 schools.

In general, throughout much of the Third and former Second World, the decline of oppressive regimes and the rise of democracy mainly since the end of the Cold War has tempered the former automatic hostility by governments toward the activities of local and international NGOs. Previously, NGO-government relationships were often ones of benign neglect at best, or of suspicion and outright hostility at worst.

A significant experiment

One noteworthy international experiment in combining intergovernmental and nongovernmental action in a coordinated policy and resource mobilisation for refugees and internally displaced populations took place in the early 1990s when the International Conference on Refugees in Central America (CIRECA) brought together UN organisations and the NGO community.⁴⁸ With UNHCR in the lead, such organisations as UNDP and WFP were brought into greater contact with external and local NGOs.

Actual and potential beneficiaries were involved from the outset in project design, implementation, and monitoring. The process induced governmental, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organisations to forge new relationships with one another as well as with dissident and insurgent groups outside internationally recognised governments. This wider orchestration also took into consideration the activities of the various UN peacekeeping and peacemaking operations.

Finances, size and independence

The relationship between governments and NGOs includes many complexities and rapid changes that sometimes run parallel to the pluralism permitted by governments. Most governments that decide to do so have little difficulty in crippling NGO activities or favouring those that increase governmental capacity either to do harm or to provide popular benefits. Foreign-based NGOs may be particularly vulnerable to host government pressure since they need permission to bring in personnel and goods, such as automobiles and communications equipment. Relief NGOs that must import large quantities of supplies, as was repeatedly demonstrated in the Horn of Africa during the two decades beginning in the 1970s, can encounter direct limitations emanating from political authorities, either in the host government or in insurgent territory.

At the same time, some NGOs operating outside of their base countries have reached formidable proportions. Agencies such as CARE or Oxfam have enough prestige not to be easily or silently dismissed with the wave of an authoritative hand. Some have programmes that, once begun, burrow deep into the social fabric. To liquidate such activities can cost a government popularity and even stimulate resistance. Moreover, development NGOs may have close working relationships and direct support from IGOS, thereby raising the potential that a local incident of interference can become a matter of unpleasant discussion in an international forum. In addition, other NGOs have impressive bases of popular support. Repressive governments, for instance, intensely dislike the activities of human rights monitoring groups and try to inhibit them. Yet such interference is also restrained by the sure knowledge that these groups have developed the ability to persuade powerful governments in Western countries. Thus, a government or an insurgent group that acts in an unrestrained manner against human rights monitors may soon be faced with formal protests and action through bilateral or intergovernmental channels.

The vigour of NGO activities may ultimately be determined by the levels and sources of their finances. Some of the largest NGOs, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and CARE, rely on contributions from governments of rich countries for most of their operating funds. As much as 90% of financing emanates from governments. The World Bank has entered into numerous partnerships with NGOs that execute projects financed by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). In 1993, for example, 30% of Bank projects had provisions for NGO participation.⁴⁹ The UNDP has changed policy over the last decade so that local NGOs are receiving allocations in the Indicative Planning Figures (IPFs) that used to be exclusively reserved for governments. The depth of such relationships, however, may vary from formal to close collaboration in phases from planning to execution.

Many organisations of the UN system routinely rely upon both international and indigenous NGOs for the delivery of relief and development assistance. For instance, in northern Iraq since the April 1991 Kurdish crisis, NGOs (including the Red Cross) have been responsible for 40% of refugees, whereas the UN system has been responsible for about 30%.⁵⁰

Putting an exact dollar value on these resources is not easy. It would be hard

to prove the contention that '[i]n net terms, NGOs now collectively transfer more resources to the South than the World Bank'.⁵¹ Over time, however, shifts of significant magnitude have taken place. During the last two decades, private grants from the 21 Western countries of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) to DAC-country NGOs for use in developing countries have grown dramatically. NGO activities represent well over 10% (perhaps even 13%) of official development assistance (ODA) in comparison with only 0.2% in 1970.⁵² Particularly over the last decade, when ODA has stagnated, NGOs have positioned themselves for a greater proportional share of total resources. Moreover, the visibility and credibility of such efforts have increased dramatically.

From another direction, private foundations have increasingly stimulated the growth of NGOs and added to the knowledge base for their work.⁵³ Favourable tax laws and a tradition of voluntarism have made this influence particularly important in the USA, where the family names of Ford, Rockefeller, MacArthur and Pew are familiar philanthropic entities. In fact, 5500 independent foundations, not including those from corporations, have assets in excess of \$2 million or give grants of at least \$200 000 per year.⁵⁴ Such institutions as the Volkswagen Foundation attest to the significance of this type of source in other parts of the Western world as well. Although the exact numbers are difficult to gauge, many directly finance operational activities, institution-building and research by NGOs at home and in connection with partners in other countries.

All NGOs and foundation donors operate under some governmental, donor-imposed or doctrinal restrictions. Especially in the USA, foundations owe their prosperity to provisions of tax laws that could be changed. They are also forbidden to act in electoral and other political spheres, and may not lobby in the way that special interest groups do. As for NGOs receiving outside government or NGO financing, these set out in programme proposals their plans for using funds. Proposals for programmes that ran counter to donor policies would hardly be likely to succeed.

Conversely, NGOs dispose of some persuasiveness in relations with donors, whether official or private. No donor would wish to invest in a programme that was foredoomed to failure. NGOs can thus signal their estimate of the practicality of policies. Moreover, once embarked on the execution of an agreed project, the NGO is in a good position to suggest policy and methodological changes, if only because the donors prefer their funds to be used in ways that can be defended against criticism.

Theories of international cooperation

Despite the rapidly rising curve of NGO numbers and activity in the context of the UN system, a firm consensus about their nature and function remains elusive. Consequently, some generalising about NGOs that operate in the international environment is necessary for a better understanding of NGO roles, but it is laden with uncertainty. The rest of this essay takes up some of the theoretical approaches that pertain to NGOs and sets out a set of dimensions that may be useful in drawing conclusions.

In general, theoretical approaches to explain international cooperation provide

little specific insight into the nature and function of NGOs. Most are based on the state as the only noteworthy entity in international cooperation, and provide no category for considering the possibility that NGOs are significant actors in their own right.

States as actors

The dominant approaches employed by governmental representatives, international officials and academic scholars to transnational cooperation emphasise states as the basic units of analysis.⁵⁵ Officials usually leave this assumption in implicit form, although international civil servants constantly underline the role of member states in their organisations. Academic scholars of this persuasion quite explicitly use the state as the basic counter, although biodiversity is increasingly obvious for a category that cannot be captured by narrow nations.⁵⁶

Since the state stands by definition, not to speak of ideology, as an autonomous organisation in a universe where only consensual limits to action are accepted as binding, an explanation is needed as to why they sometimes cooperate. Two main possibilities, both based on promotion of national interest, emerge.

The first is that cooperation among states is actually induced by the use of persuasion or coercion by one state over another.⁵⁷ This line of argument accords with analyses that set out mainly military power as the final arbiter of international relations. No state finds it in its interest to be expunged or defeated militarily, and therefore it eventually bows to superior force, whether it is latent or applied. Thus, a hierarchy based on military calculation in fact reigns among nominally equal states. This approach, incidentally, accords with much of the rhetoric of diplomats and foreign policy specialists.

The second explanation relies implicitly or explicitly on a market rather than a military calculation.⁵⁸ States cooperate in the search for material advantages. Thus, they reckon whether there is more to gain from cooperation than from withdrawal or conflict. If they do not cooperate, in all but a few instances coercion to do so is absent.

This line of reasoning is the basis for the extensive academic theorising about international regimes.⁵⁹ These institutions for international governance, based on the voluntary acceptance of rules of state conduct in regard to specific issues, do not require explicit international organisations or even formal international accords, but they continue over extended periods of time as the actual guides to state policy. Thus, international regimes do not necessarily always have much relationship to the organisations of the UN system, even though their concerns may overlap.

Paralleling these approaches is the conventional legal approach to NGOs.⁶⁰ This depends on the exercise of authority by states, on the consent of states as the basis of application of rules, and on the notion of some type of self-interest as the underlying reason for acceding to cooperative arrangements. International organisations are treated ultimately as creatures of national self-interest, however and by whomever that is defined. NGOs fit into this scheme of thinking as entities

whose activities have to be regulated to conform to the broader undertakings of states.

Even if it is accepted that the state is the primary unit of international relations, the political and legal explanations based on self-interest leave little room for autonomous NGO activity. If such theoretical approaches are made more sophisticated by incorporating considerations of domestic political processes as the determinant of national interest, a focus on transnational NGO activity in shaping decisions is usually left distant or obscured. Moreover, the national self-interest approaches imply a crisp consensus within governments as to the degree of international cooperation and its desired outcome. Whether this can be demonstrated empirically is subject to doubt. Finally, the implicit emphasis of rational decision making on the basis of national interest draws attention away from the social bases of the state. The state is an abstraction. Governments, not states, actually make decisions to cooperate or not. Governments consist of people, a point that NGOs obviously do not neglect.

Social approach

A different and less widely accepted approach to international cooperation emphasises the social bases of politics.⁶¹ It begins with the proposition that governments are social organs made up of people who have complex relationships with other parts of their own and other societies. It is presumed that these relationships may have a bearing on the decisions taken by governments as the vital representation of states to involve themselves in international cooperation.

Among such approaches, organisation theory has general application but has been infrequently used as the basis for research on international cooperation.⁶² This theory abandons the traditional view of organisations as formal and self-contained units. It is concerned with relations between formally autonomous organisations with diffuse accountability and division of responsibility, whether in the national or international arenas. Such relations typically involve inter-organisational bargaining where informal organisation is of the essence.

Organisation theory posits that organisations are made up of people who work together to produce a particular product by means of a relevant technique. From this base, propositions can be developed to analyse at least subgovernmental units, if not governments as a whole, as well as international agencies and NGOs. It asks what people are involved, what joint work they perform, what methods they use, and what emerges from their work. Such analyses can also trace changes taking place in organisations and their products.

Organisations, moreover, can be bound together to form new organisations, or what could be termed meta-organisations. International organisations such as the UN system, for instance, can be viewed as such meta-organisations, as can federations of NGOs. This notion necessarily involves interorganisational relationships that have great importance at the international level and in particular in connection with NGOs. But these relationships are carried on by people, rather than by abstractions, just as is the case within organisations made up only of individuals.

A commonplace of organisational analysis holds that informal links among

organisational participants congeal alongside formal structures. This is a phenomenon that every diplomat and political leader acknowledges by seeking personal contacts with people who have ability to persuade within their own circles. Informal links often prove to be essential to organisational work, adaptation to changing conditions and continued existence. In transnational organisational relationships, which include those formed by NGOs, it is natural that a web of informal links develops to confront issues defined in the formal structures.

This points in the direction of network analysis, which focuses on the links between interdependent actors. Formal organisations—private and public, national and international—form the foundation of transnational networks. However, participants in networks are not organisations in their entirety but certain individuals in the constituent organisations. The interface between organisations consists primarily of boundary-role occupants. As 'activist brokers' between their organisation and its environment, boundary-role occupants must represent the organisation to its environment, and also represent the environment to their constituents.⁶³

Students of networks have pointed to the centrality of so-called linking-pin organisations, which occupy central positions in terms of being reachable from and being able to reach most other organisations in the network. Serving as brokers and communication channels between organisations in the networks, linking-pin organisations are the 'nodes through which a network is loosely joined'.⁶⁴ One research question is to what extent NGOs have been able to assume linking-pin positions in transnational networks.

The sophisticated conceptual device of the social network has found little use in research on international cooperation. What exactly are the durable sets of relationships among individuals who are in a position to exchange information, resources and prestige? Individuals in this position in interorganisational relationships can usually be described as occupying boundary roles. In that role, they can easily be engaged in the activities characterised as a social network, which affect their own organisations as well. Thus, a transnational social network would depend on persons from different countries and organisations who engage in their relationships over a considerable period. The network, then, is defined by what it does, not by an organisational form, defined structure or material appurtenances.

In brief, networks represent flat or horizontal organisational forms in contrast to vertical ones based on hierarchical authority. Networks, in other words, rest on the coexistence of autonomy and interdependence. Whereas hierarchy is the natural organising principle of states, and markets are the natural organising principle of business organisations, networks are readily associated with NGOs.⁶⁵ By positioning themselves centrally in informal networks, NGOs can exert an influence above and beyond their weak formal status. In the international arena, these possibilities are enhanced because effective cooperation among states operating in an anarchic environment often implies precisely the kind of informality and network-building that work well for NGOs. Although network analysis requires the assembly of detailed data and sometimes lengthy observa-

tion, it would seem a most promising technique for analysing the function of transnational NGOs.

Another socially-oriented analytical concept that has been applied to international cooperation is that of the epistemic community.⁶⁶ This notion seeks to explain changes in the programs and doctrines of international organisations through the operation of transnational sets of experts. Their common vision on the proper outlook on a set of issues—protection of the environment has featured most prominently—underlies their efforts to capture existing organisations and redirect their work. Their persuasiveness derives from consensual knowledge growing from advanced technological competence. It eventually convinces other leaders and organisational managers. This concept, too, would appear to be relevant to a better understanding of NGOs, although its emphasis on technological expertness may limit its appropriateness to a narrow range of issues.

An even less formally organized type of participant in international policy and administrative processes is composed of prominent persons who, by dint of expertise, experience, office or other distinguishing characteristic, earn deference. They may be asked to serve on honorific official commissions and as highly expert technical consultants on defined issues. Many have high visibility and credibility from their previous tenure in senior positions in governments and parliaments, or from their reputations as insightful intellectuals. Some work on their own accounts, others for governments, corporations, universities and specialist firms. Some of the assignments are ongoing, some are for a fixed period. Their tasks are sometimes performed for immediate consumption by UN organisations but also with an eye on other consumers in a broader public. Examples are the members of the UN Advisory Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy (appointed by Dag Hammarskjöld) or Max van der Stoep, former foreign minister of the Netherlands, who was appointed by the Commission on Human Rights as Rapporteur on Human Rights in Iraq. Such 'influentials', with or without official appointments, are often consulted informally by opinion leaders and national and international officials.

An increasingly common practice has been to ask such prominent individuals to serve as members of high-visibility *ad hoc* commissions—those headed by Willy Brandt, Olaf Palme, Gro Harlem-Brundtland, Sadruddin Aga Khan, Julius Nyerere and, most recently, by Ingmar Carlsson and Sonny Ramphal are perhaps the best known.⁶⁷ They constitute visible groups that come together for short-term specialised advisory assignments. Their work has much in common with the efforts of educational NGOs. Other groups of less prominent professionals—not just Médecins Sans Frontières but also, for instance, architects and physicists without borders—attempt to make their collective views known in international policy circles and among broader publics. Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) is one such pooling of politicians who have a primary interest in global problem-solving and in the United Nations.

Broad roles for NGOs

These theoretical approaches to international cooperation could aid in analysing NGO activity and in reaching conclusions, but none of them appears fully apt for

an investigation that emphasises concrete activities and observation born of participation. Rather, it might be better to base such an examination on a close scrutiny of goals, relationships among various organisations and operating methods. This may eventually lead to more general conclusions about the weight and scope of NGO participation in international cooperation. An initial sorting, suggested to the authors of the case studies that follow in this issue, sets out two general roles that reflect both goals and operating methods. Few if any NGOs are likely at all times to set out goals and use methods that are confined exclusively to these discrete categories, but this broad typology can help point out their main thrust.

Operational roles

At least part of the activities of most NGOs falls into the category of operations. Operational NGOs are the most numerous and have the easiest fundraising task. They are more and more central to international responses in the post-cold war world. Most NGOs provide some services, if only to their members, while others concentrate on providing them to other organisations and individuals. The delivery of services is the mainstay of most NGO budgets and the basis for enthusiastic support from a wide range of donors. Such services include intangible technical advice as well as more tangible resources for relief, development and other purposes. Many NGOs operate development programmes; they have become increasingly active in migration and disaster relief, which may now be their most important operational or advisory activities in total financial terms.

Bilateral and multilateral government organisations are relying upon NGOs more and more as project subcontractors. Some of these contractors, known as DONGOS, could be dedicated organisations and even disappear after the conclusion of a project. Others have long histories as contractors. NGOs recover their staff costs and overheads in addition to the direct costs of the products that they deliver but, unlike private contractors, they do not make a profit to redistribute since there are no shareholders. Some NGO managers are delighted with this trend since it expands the scope of their activities with increased resources. Others, however, are troubled about being exploited by governments or intergovernmental organisations rather than remaining institutions with their own unique purposes and independent wherewithal.

Such contractual relationships on the one hand offer opportunities to NGOs to persuade donors to adopt their approaches; but on the other hand they include powerful incentives in the form of financial support to accede to the views of donor organisations. The key to operational integrity is being a partner and not simply a contractor. The former term connotes authentic collaboration and mutual respect, and it accepts the autonomy and pluralism of NGOs. Such relationships are rare, more an aspiration than a reality.⁶⁸ It is difficult to imagine NGOs enjoying authentic collaboration and genuine partnership with large and powerful agencies. However, in certain circumstances and as mentioned earlier, there seems to be a greater possibility with more sympathetic funders like UNICEF and UNHCR.⁶⁹

Educational and advocacy roles

The targets of operational NGOs are beneficiaries (or victims in emergencies), whereas those for educational and advocacy NGOs are their own contributors, the public and decision makers. Educational NGOs seek primarily to influence citizens, whose voices are then registered through public opinion and bear fruit in the form of additional resources for their activities as well as new policies, better decisions and enhanced international regimes. They often play a leading role in promoting the various dedication of 'days', 'years', and 'decades' that the UN system regularly proclaims. NGOs can help to reinforce various norms promoted by intergovernmental organisations through public education campaigns. This heightened awareness among public audiences can then help hold states accountable for their international commitments.⁷⁰

Western operational NGOs are under growing pressure from their Third World partners to educate contributors and Western publics about the root causes of poverty and violence. This logic is driving some organisations to adapt to such harsh criticism as the following: 'Conventional NGO project activities are manifestly "finger-in-the-dike" responses to problems that require nothing short of worldwide and whole-hearted governmental commitment to combat'.⁷¹ Hand-in-hand with operational activities is the need to educate populations and mobilise public opinion about the requirements for fundamental alterations in the global order.

Educational NGOs direct activities towards a broad public or towards specifically differentiated publics in order to persuade them to voice opinions on governmental policies in international organisations. The primary tool of the educational and advocacy NGO is collecting and disseminating information, which sometimes incorporates a high degree of expertness and sometimes consists of mainly emotional appeals.

Educational as well as other varieties of NGOs can be distinguished from social movements,⁷² even if the aims and methods are sometimes similar. The former are organisations with visible structures, are generally tolerated as parts of the polity and can make sure that their interests are represented in decision processes. Social movements, in contrast, have loose or skimpy structures to give effect to a rather spontaneous coming together of people who seek to achieve a social goal that may include changing or preserving aspects of society. One or more NGOs may be associated with social movements but do not define or direct them.

Linked to education are the related concerns of NGOs working primarily in the corridors of governments and intergovernmental organisations. Using a distinctive venue for advocacy, these organisations aim at contributing to international agenda-setting, the design of programmes and overall supervision of international organisation activities. They do so by seeking discussions with national delegates and staff members of international secretariats. Under some circumstances they can make formal statements before UN deliberative organs, and they frequently submit documentation for use by government representatives. In the corridors of UN organisations, they offer expertise, research, drafting and even mediation to governmental representatives and organisational staff. In

doing so, the NGO representatives hope to promote acceptance of their positions, which involve adjustment or change of policies.

These advocates pursue discussions with national delegates and staff members of international secretariats in order to influence international public policy. Calling this activity 'lobbying' is perhaps an accurate image but an inaccurate description according to dictionary definitions. In seeking to alter the policies of governments as well as of governmental, intergovernmental and nongovernmental agencies, these NGOs seek to influence all policy makers, not only legislators.

Rather than aiming at beneficiaries or the general public, as is the case for the operational and educational types, advocacy NGOs target key decision makers in parliaments as well as in governments and intergovernmental secretariats. Because they have a direct impact on international responses, advocacy NGOs have the most difficulty raising funds.

NGO advocacy may be generally described as unofficial participation by internal and external modes.⁷³ Internal modes can be observed in capitals and domestic arenas. They include such things as pressure on a government to participate in a treaty-making effort; formation of domestic coalitions and the mobilisation of public opinion to influence the positions a state takes during treaty negotiations; public pressure on a government to sign a treaty; and using the strengths and weaknesses of a country's domestic system to challenge governments, companies and others to comply.

External modes consist of urging the United Nations or one of its associated agencies to add an issue to the agenda; gathering data to help frame or define a problem or a threat in ways that influence the work of official UN-sanctioned conferences; and contributing to the implementation of treaties by assisting countries without expertise to meet their obligations. Through formal statements in UN forums and through informal negotiations with international civil servants and members of national delegations, advocacy NGOs seek to ensure that their positions, and those of their constituencies, find their way into international texts and decisions. They sometimes offer their research and drafting skills, and they provide scientific or polling data to support their positions.⁷⁴ Also, first-hand reports and testimony from field staff can be powerful tools before parliamentary committees.

External functions generally require mobilisation across state boundaries. Independent researchers and scholars, usually as part of transnational networks, contribute theoretical arguments or empirical evidence in favour of a particular response. This information is used by NGOs and helps build coalitions of individuals and groups that otherwise would not join forces.

A great deal of past NGO advocacy has been directed against government and UN policy. An important evolution is that a growing number of NGOs are eager to institutionalise a 'full-fledged partnership with the governmental members of the United Nations'.⁷⁵ Historically NGOs have had some responsibility for treaty implementation, but they may aspire to a more direct involvement in treaty-making. Some NGOs have contributed substantially to international agenda-setting, as at the San Francisco Conference in April 1945, where NGOs played a pivotal role in securing the inclusion of human rights language in the final draft of the UN

Charter. In fact, they have spurred action since the middle of the 19th century at each stage in the evolution of international protection for human rights.⁷⁶

As with the venerable debate over the impact of the media on foreign policy, there is disagreement about NGO influence on governmental responses. However, NGOs that seek government policy change can be crucial for the timing and nature of international responses, even in such controversial arenas as civil wars. NGOs in the USA, for example, failed to get the Clinton Administration to acknowledge genocide and to take action in Rwanda in April and May 1994, but eventually they were more successful in getting the Pentagon to help in Zaire and Tanzania. For three years, many US NGOs encouraged a robust enough military invasion to restore the elected government of the Rev Jean-Bertrand Aristide in Haiti. In France, NGOs have been successful in launching and sustaining an activist humanitarian policy, *le droit d'ingérence*, which became the official policy of the Mitterrand government and its visible Minister Bernard Kouchner, and which survives both of their departures.⁷⁷

NGOs that focus exclusively on education or advocacy in their own countries without overseas activities are not numerous, but they exist. For example, the Refugee Policy Group, Refugees International, and the US Committee for Refugees all focus on research with a view towards informing the public and altering public policy on people displaced by war. However, many of the most effective educators and advocates are those with the credibility, knowledge and convictions resulting from substantial operational activities.

Many NGOs that started their work at a project level mitigating the symptoms of problems have moved into attacking the structural roots of those problems. As such, they draw away from an exclusive concern with projects and move towards preventing the need for the assistance in the first place. Projects alone cannot promote structural change and prevention. The logic of the shift towards educating the public about the necessity for systemic change moves away from a preoccupation with relief, and is summed up by two observers: 'Many of the causes of underdevelopment lie in the political and economic structures of an unequal world ... and in the misguided policies of governments and the multilateral institutions (such as the World Bank and IMF) which they control. It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to address these issues in the context of the traditional NGO project.'⁷⁸ In these efforts to target officials within governmental and intergovernmental institutions, NGOs can be loud and theatrical, like Médecins Sans Frontières and Greenpeace, or discreet and more subtle, like the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Advocacy is an essential and growing activity. As such, the debate about possible modifications of consultative status in UN forums is important at least for some NGOs. Consultative status provides additional access to and enhanced authority in the eyes of many governments and UN officials.

Political levels and constraints

A complementary or alternative approach to NGO roles depends on identifying relationships among them and their governmental levels of activity.⁷⁹ Primary associations are those serving members at the community level; these may be

called people's organisations. As their base, scope of operations and methods are circumscribed, they can be excluded from the group of transnational NGOs with direct relevance to the UN system. Secondary organisations include public-serving groups that operate at the community level as well as federations of member-serving primary associations. Tertiary organisations are those that do not operate at the community level and also comprise federations of secondary organisations. Thus, only public-serving organisations and meta-organisations that they form may be considered as NGOs with transnational significance.

Further distinctions can be drawn between organisations that work at the community level and those that do not. National NGOs that work only within the boundaries of one developing country can be distinguished from international NGOs that are based in developed countries. Refining classificatory factors include constituency, primary functions and activities, ideology/philosophy, scale and coverage or organisational structure.

NGO interactions may be constrained or facilitated according to the consensus surrounding the issues that they address. Environmental NGOs, for instance, work within an overall and seemingly expanding agreement about protecting the biosphere. Development NGOs, in contrast, are partly sustained by a consensus about the necessity for growth, even though they often encounter significant discord when they begin to threaten elites. Human rights NGOs, however, pursue agendas in which governments, intergovernmental organisations and NGOs disagree profoundly about goals, ideas, the nature of violations and appropriate forms of redress. Therefore, NGOs working on the front lines where ethnic cleansing takes place, lobbying for human rights changes, or doing education and advocacy work face different constraints from NGOs struggling to save rain forests or to advance development.

Separate microsystems of issues have their own attributes and exigencies that condition the existence of NGOs. Within each microsystem, the potential for collaboration or conflict by NGOs and the UN is distinct.⁸⁰ Moreover, the varied aims and methods of NGOs range from constructive dialogue, that is incrementalism or reform from within, to shouting from the sidelines for revolution, rejection and nihilism.

Dimensions for analysing NGOs

A search for identities within the explorations in the specific case studies in this volume offer data on which further research could be based and would provide tests of the appropriateness of typologies and theoretical approaches. Accordingly, four sets of dimensions—organisation, governance, strategies and output—were suggested to the authors of subsequent essays. These dimensions are displayed in Table 1 and discussed in the succeeding paragraphs; they also provide a structure for the concluding essay.

The dimensions are divided into four categories. The first two, organisation and governance, have special relevance to locating the site of activities within governing structures and understanding the structures and aims of NGOs. The second two, strategic and output, have to do with the techniques and products of NGOs.

TABLE I
NGO dimensions

<i>Organisational dimensions</i>	<i>Governance dimensions</i>	<i>Strategic dimensions</i>	<i>Output dimensions</i>
<i>Geographic range</i>	<i>Governmental contact</i>	<i>Goal definition</i>	<i>Information</i>
Community	Intergovernmental	Single issue	Expert advice
Subnational	International conferences	Multisectoral	Financing
National	Regional	Broad social	Material goods and services
Regional	National	Church related	Support for policies
Transnational	Subnational	Social ideology	Mobilisation of opinion
	Community	Revolutionary/rejectionist	(leaders and followers)
<i>Support base</i>	Informal transnational	<i>Tactical modes</i>	Maintenance of
Personal memberships		Monitoring	interorganisational relations
Other organisations	<i>Range of concern</i>	Advocacy/lobbying	Political feedback among
Quasi-governmental	Norm setting	Mass propaganda	governmental units
Mixture of above	Policy setting	Mass demonstration	Encouragement of networks
	Policy execution		Education of specific publics
<i>Personnel</i>	Contractor		
Managerial	Mediation between levels		
Basic research			
Expert and professional (applied)			
Undifferentiated			
(popular, voluntary)			
<i>Financing</i>			
Membership dues			
Contributions			
Endowment income			
Compensation			
<i>Legal relationships</i>			
General rules			
Regulations			
Ad hoc guidelines			

Organisational dimensions

These dimensions are intended to make clear two aspects of NGO existence and operation. The first is where they fit in an organisational framework that extends from the village to the globe, and who supports them. The second aspect concerns their internal arrangements and participation, their resource bases, and their legal status. Membership and financial information make possible comparisons relating to the size of NGOs. Since the legal dimensions of NGOs have had a great deal of attention, they are touched on only briefly in the case studies.

Governance dimensions

These dimensions comprise information about the instruments of governmental policy and programme administration with which NGOs come into contact. The subcategory, 'Range of Concern', helps distinguish among the characters of the arrangements for governance in which NGOs may participate. For example, a substantial difference in governance may be presumed between a situation in which an NGO simply works as a contractor for a regional intergovernmental agency from one that is involved in the discussion of a new global law-making treaty.

Strategic dimensions

These dimensions set out what NGOs hope to achieve within the organisational and governance dimensions. The emphasis here is on relationships directed inwards, ie, how NGOs choose to relate to IGOS and governments on policy issues and design of projects. They include both the normative basis for action and, under tactical modes, the methods employed for reaching the goals. A wide range of data can be expected by searching out the effects of these dimensions. Along their lines, NGOs differentiate themselves from each other and reinforce their support bases. The tactical modes, however, have primary significance in the relation to the UN system.

Output dimensions

These dimensions are framed to make evident the results of NGO activity within the framework of the UN system. They are highly significant in determining whether NGOs can reach their goals. They include a set of products of organisational work that bear on how the UN system reacts and also on how NGOs maintain relationships with one other in reaching their goals. The outputs relate to services delivered to organisational membership as well as to external persons and organisations.

Conclusion

NGOs are omnipresent in the policy and administrative process of UN organisations; the extent of their participation has progressively deepened. The turbulent

pluralism of the NGO realm has clearly brought new and unanticipated groups into the process. Without attributing either a positive or negative value to NGO activity, it can nevertheless be recognised as a factor in global governance. Yet this phenomenon, contrary to the conventional assumptions about the virtually exclusive role of governments in international politics, has not been fully described nor adequately encompassed in theoretical approaches.

Defining categories of NGO tasks, their transnational relationships and the impact of their efforts marks an initial step towards understanding the variety of nongovernmental interactions with the UN system. They form part of a larger set of analytical challenges as the international community gropes and copes with changing world politics and trends towards the decentralisation and democratisation of global governance. These include a vast variety of cooperative structures and practices that have emerged in and around the United Nations and its associated organisations.

There is an obvious hypothesis: NGOs have been essential in this evolution. Because NGOs, both local and international, increasingly affect world politics, theoretical and practical understandings of NGO activities are intrinsically important. Moreover, they are crucial for comprehending the problems and prospects of the UN system more generally. It is to an examination of cases of NGOs in action that this volume now turns.

Notes

The authors acknowledge the assistance of Carrie Murphy and Minh Vo in the preparation of this article.

¹ *Yearbook of International Associations*, Brussels: Union of International Associations, 1993/94. The actual figure is 16 142 but it is increasing constantly. In fact, the figure more than doubled from 1991. The *OECD Directory of NGOs* (Paris: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1991) estimates some 2500 NGOs in OECD countries in 1990, up from 1600 a decade earlier. They also estimate some 20 000 local NGOs in developing countries, although the UNDP's *Human Development Report 1994* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994) estimates that the number is considerably higher, at about 50 000.

² Commission on Global Governance, *Our Global Neighbourhood*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 251.

³ John Clark, *Democratizing Development: The Role of Voluntary Organizations*, Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, 1991, p. 3.

⁴ Marc Nerfin, 'Neither prince nor merchant: citizen – an introduction to the third system', *IFDA Dossier*, 56, November/December 1986, pp. 3–29. See also David C. Korten, *Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and The Global Agenda*, Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, 1990, pp. 95–112.

⁵ Kathleen D. McCarthy, Virginia Hodgkinson, Russy Sumariwalla et al., *The Nonprofit Sector in the United States*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1992, p. 3.

⁶ Thomas Prince & Matthias Finger, *Environmental NGOs in World Politics*, London: Routledge, 1994.

⁷ James N. Rosenau, *Turbulence in World Politics: A Theory of Continuity and Change*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990 and *The United Nations in a Turbulent World*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992.

⁸ The authors are grateful to Christer Jönsson and Peter Söderholm for their formulations.

⁹ Joseph A. Camilleri & Jim Falk, *The End of Sovereignty? The Politics of a Shrinking and Fragmenting World*, Aldershot, UK: Edward Elgar, 1992, p. 3.

¹⁰ Jennifer Wolch, *The Shadow State: Government and Voluntary Sector in Transition*, New York: The Foundation Center, 1990.

¹¹ Brad Smith, President of the Inter-American Foundation, quoted by Mary Morgan, 'Stretching the development dollar, the potential for scaling-up', *Grassroots Development*, 14 (1), 1990, p. 7.

¹² David L. Brown & David Korten, *Understanding Voluntary Organizations: Guidelines for Donors*, Working Papers No. 258 (Washington, DC: Country Economics Department, World Bank, September 1989), p. 22.

¹³ *UNIFEM Annual Report 1993*, New York: United Nations Development Fund for Women, 1993, p. 9. See also

- Stephen P Marks, 'Forgetting "the policies and practices of the past": impunity in Cambodia', *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, 18 (2), 1994, pp 17-43; and Jarat Chopra, *United Nations Authority in Cambodia, Occasional Paper #15*, Providence, RI: Watson Institute, 1994.
- ¹⁴ Antonio Donini, 'Missions impossibles', *Le monde des débats*, July-August 1994, p 4.
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- ⁸⁰ The authors are grateful to Charles McCormack for having helped develop ideas along these lines during the July 1994 summer workshop organised by the Academic Council on the United Nations System.

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1996 - Volume 1 (3 issues). ISSN 1356-9317.

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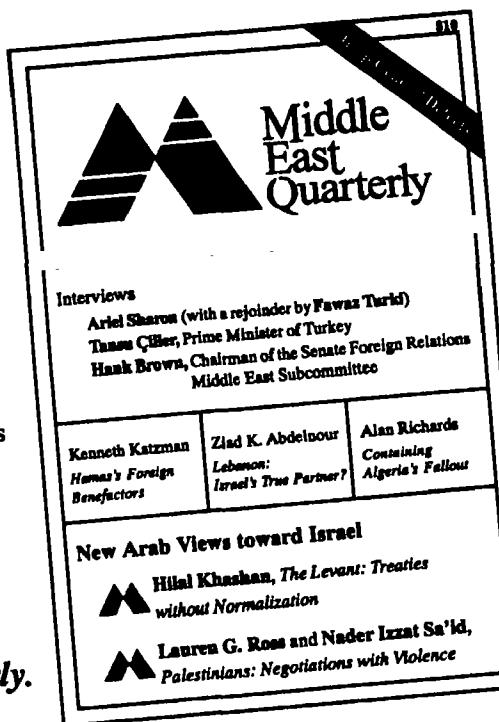
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both warring parties were to be sustained by the principle protagonists in the Cold War. The revolt against President Najibullah by his own army in 1992 came only after the former Soviet Union cut all food and weapons aid to the regime. Thus the Afghan state was intrinsically fragile and remains so today.

Both sides also preferred to militarise the conflict rather than build alternative political administrations and alliances. Thus 42% of President Najibullah's Central Committee were drawn from the army and the intelligence services. Rubin describes how Khad, the Afghan intelligence agency, replaced politics with a generalised violence against the entire Afghan society. Likewise the US and Pakistan took a policy decision to support those Mujheddin leaders who killed the most Russians, rather than those who enjoyed popularity or built liberated zones where a civilian administration could take root.

Rubin shows how critical the Afghan conflict had become by 1989 when the Soviets began their withdrawal. In that year, the Soviets pumped in some US\$3 billion worth of weapons and other aid to save the Kabul regime, while the US and Saudi Arabia responded with grants of nearly US\$2 billion to the Mujheddin to conquer Kabul—staggering sums even in today's world and almost all totally wasted.

The CIA and the ISI come in for severe criticism. The author describes how both agencies favoured the fundamentalist Mujheddin, forbidding more traditional Afghan methods of creating a political consensus such as the Loya Jirga. He also describes how the ISI used weapons and money to sustain a fragmented leadership, where commanders were built up and then deliberately undermined by providing their lieutenants with arms, so that they could not build independent political bases, and how radicals like Hikmetyar received 100% of the cost of transporting weapons into Afghanistan while the moderate groups received only 15%. Forced to sell weapons to pay for donkeys, the moderates were then branded as corrupt by the ISI and CIA.

Rubin's description of the shifting alliances and deals that were made in the 1992 Mujheddin take-over of Kabul is certainly the best and most authoritative to date, even though he leans heavily in favour of commander Ahmad Shah Masud, the powerful General who virtually rules Kabul today. For Masud's role in building up an independent power base, free of foreign intelligence manipulation and his military prowess, the authors bias may be justified. But it is Ahmad Shah's lack of political acumen and inability to forge and sustain political rather than military alliances, that has perhaps created the present impasse where the Kabul regime is now facing threats from all sides.

Masud was able to enter Kabul in 1992 because the Parcham-based officer corps in the city let him in, once Najibulla had stepped down. Rubin writes that in those critical days when Masud was based in Charikar, outside Kabul and was invited by Parcham to become head of state, he was reassuring Pashtun commanders that he would not take up the offer or enter Kabul unilaterally. I visited Masud several times in Charikar at that time and in fact he was trying to persuade Pashtun commanders to dump Hikmetyar and join him in the march on Kabul.

Much as senior Pashtun commanders such as Abdul Haq and Jalaluddin Haqqani hated Hikmetyar, they remained unpersuaded by Masud. His failure to win over even nominal support from the Pashtuns has plagued him ever since. The fact remains that even moderate Pashtuns did not trust Masud's politics or his overriding ambition. Later Masud then failed to hold together his own alliance with Uzbek General Rashid Dostum and the Shia Hazaras. By 1993, they had both been offended by him and joined up with Hikmetyar. Today Rabbani and Masud are facing a combined opposition of many of those forces who were once allied with them.

Rubin's book is a catalogue of failures. The failure of communism and Islam, the failure of state building in a tribal society, the failures of the Cold War and the proxy war that its protagonists fought in Afghanistan. Only for the ordinary Afghan, who

values, but also reflected their realistic assessment of events—the failure of interwar treaties to protect minorities and a world war stoked by the fires of hatred, dehumanisation and genocide. They were convinced that only if the rights of all people were protected would the rights of particular minority, ethnic and religious groups be ensured and future conflicts avoided. The consultants—led by Joseph Proskauer and Jacob Blaustein of the American Jewish Committee, together with Frederick Nolde of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ, Clark Eichelberger of the American Association for the UN and James Shotwell of the Carnegie Endowment—persuaded the US delegation and to make the world organisation different from its predecessor.

On 2 May 1945, upon being informed by a US delegate that human rights would not appear in the Charter, Proskauer and his colleagues stayed up into the night preparing a detailed memorandum, which argued that human rights are essential not only to domestic life but also to international peace. The next day, they rallied those organisations present in San Francisco to sign it, including the groups named above and other civic groups such as the National Association of Manufacturers, the Chamber of Commerce, the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, the American Bar Association, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the League of Women Voters. The organisations met US Secretary of State Edward Stettinius. Nolde summarised the memorandum and Proskauer argued the political necessity of including human rights in the Charter:

I said that the voice of America was speaking in this room as it had never spoken before in any international gathering; that that voice was saying to the American delegation: "If you make a fight for these human rights proposals and win, there will be glory for all. If you make a fight for it and lose, we will back you up to the limit. If you fail to make a fight for it, you will have lost the support of American opinion – and justly lost it. In that event, you will never get the Charter ratified..."³

The Secretary of State declared that he was convinced; and within a day, all the Big Four powers agreed. As a result, encouraging respect for human rights is one of the four purposes of the United Nations set forth in the Charter, and a Commission on Human Rights is called for by name.

Several consultant organisations had advocated an 'international bill of rights' well before the San Francisco Conference. On 20 March 1945, the American Jewish Committee presented this proposal to President Roosevelt and obtained his support. A petition with 1300 prominent signatures appeared in the newspapers. This NGO coalition also decisively backed formal status of nongovernmental organisations in the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); Article 71 established such status.⁴

Nevertheless, in a 1947 resolution, member states proclaimed that the UN 'had no power to take any action in regard to any complaints concerning human rights'.⁵ For years, this rendered the United Nations Human Rights Commission largely a talking shop for talented lawyers. Undeterred, nongovernmental organisations provided expert advice on the human rights standards that the commission had begun to draft. In 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted, affirming civil and political rights and including freedom from

torture, rights to free speech, association, and religion, and such economic and social rights as the right to education, social security, and equal pay for equal work. As UN human rights programmes conducted studies and continued standard-setting (resulting in six human rights treaties), NGOs regularly offered theoretical insights, examples, draft language and other advice.

Creating UN machinery to respond to human rights abuses

Although mentioning specific countries or violations was long forbidden in UN chambers, human rights NGOs called for intergovernmental machinery to combat abuses. At first, they asked for an 'Attorney General' or 'High Commissioner for Human Rights'—a senior official able to investigate and take action to combat gross abuses. For a long time, this idea languished.⁶ The mere mention by name of a country by an NGO in a speech at the Commission on Human Rights was cause enough for it to be ruled out of order, and such behaviour often led to threats of expulsion.⁷

Nongovernmental human rights organisations have shown that individuals are protected from abuses as a result of the 'mobilisation of shame'—heightened embarrassment of government officials over specific violations, directed against specific individuals, and not as a result of bland expressions of concern over generic rights standards. Reports issued by nongovernmental organisations about identifiable atrocities—torture, disappearances, political killings and massacres, among others—motivated governments to support new UN machinery to address specific violations. A confidential UN procedure begun in the late 1960s as a result of Resolution 1503 looked into documented complaints of human rights violations. Later, scrutiny took place in public sessions of the Commission on Human Rights (Resolution 1235).

For years, the choice of countries criticised publicly by the Commission on Human Rights reflected the politics of the United Nations and its member states more than independent or comparative judgments about the nature of abuses. Thus, the first special human rights teams investigating violations examined South Africa in 1967, Israel in 1968 and Chile in 1975. The Commission on Human Rights, composed of government representatives, continues to cite specific countries for their human rights abuses only when the votes can be gathered.⁸

Often, individuals (alternatively called 'expert', 'special representative' or 'special rapporteur') were charged with investigating the facts and reporting back. In virtually every instance—before the UN decided to appoint rapporteurs on Guatemala, Bolivia, El Salvador, Poland, Afghanistan, Iran, Cuba, Myanmar, Sweden, Zaire, and, following emergency sessions in 1992 and 1993, former Yugoslavia and Rwanda—NGOs stepped forward with documentary evidence of abuses, often detailed in plenary speeches at the Commission on Human Rights. Not surprisingly, violator countries themselves compete actively for election to the Commission and the ECOSOC NGO committee, both to protect themselves from a negative vote and to reply to and often intimidate the nongovernmental organisations.

Frustrated by the political obstacles to public criticism, NGOs and concerned

governments advocated establishment of effective, independent and impartial UN human rights machinery to report on and stop violations. Nongovernmental organisations contribute decisively to this by providing the facts and specific case materials.

Creation of a regionally-balanced, five-person Working Group on Forced or Involuntary Disappearances—the first mechanism that could take action globally on individual cases on an emergency basis—was motivated largely by the horrific, detailed local and international NGO reports about ‘disappearances’, first in Chile and later in Argentina. In the words of one author, Amnesty International’s (AI) 1977 fact-finding mission to Argentina was ‘one of the most significant human rights missions ever undertaken by a nongovernmental organisation’. It energised those directly involved, turning supporters of the regime into critics, making the organisation a focal point for the families of victims and adding credibility and authenticity to Amnesty’s reporting as a human rights NGO. Additionally, it mobilised AI and governments to develop the first issue-specific UN ‘thematic’ mechanism.⁹

In response to the reporting and speeches by human rights NGOs at the February 1977 session of the Commission, Argentina threatened to withdraw UN consultative status from the small group of human rights NGOs, including the International Commission of Jurists, Pax Romana, the International League for Human Rights, Amnesty International and the International Federation of Human Rights. Several of these nongovernmental organisations brought Argentinean ‘witnesses’ (victims, family members or human rights defenders) to Geneva to testify. Not only did the Argentine government question the witnesses’ facts and motives, it also challenged their right to speak, on the grounds that they were not properly designated representatives, or members of the organisations under whose aegis they appeared.¹⁰

In 1980, when the proposal to establish a working group on disappearances formally came to the floor of the Commission on Human Rights, no government was ready to speak. Instead, the chair turned to the NGO speakers list. Amnesty International began to describe its efforts to document thousands of disappearances worldwide, citing Argentina, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Nicaragua and Uganda.¹¹ When AI started to describe the experience of two Argentineans who had been tortured and imprisoned in a secret detention centre, Argentina’s government delegate tried to stop this speech by questioning the right of a nongovernmental organisation to attack a government by name. Commission members Uruguay and Ethiopia backed Argentina, while Canada and the United States supported the right of NGOs to mention specific countries. In an important decision, the Jordanian chairman then ruled that nongovernmental organisations could not ‘attack’ governments but could ‘provide information’ about countries. The ability to confront governments at the United Nations with the facts was thus sustained. Next, the International Commission of Jurists and the International League for Human Rights each presented more information on disappearances.

The action soon shifted to behind-the-scenes diplomacy. It was another week until public debate on disappearances resumed, with intense manoeuvring aimed at creating a genuinely effective new mechanism. In the meantime, NGOs

mobilised media and diplomatic pressure favouring quick-acting UN machinery.¹²

Because of too few votes to cite Argentina by name, the Commission on Human Rights created a UN expert body to examine 'disappearances' everywhere. This proved to be a strategically brilliant breakthrough. By 1995 about 10 similarly conceived 'thematic mechanisms' in human rights have been established: a five-person working group on arbitrary detentions and 'special rapporteurs' to conduct expert investigations on summary executions, torture, religious intolerance, freedom of expression, violence against women, sale of children, independence of the judiciary, internally displaced persons and contemporary forms of racism.

The NGO role: providing information to make the machinery work

The 'thematic mechanisms' capitalise on the UN's legitimacy as the premier global international institution and its ability to reach out or into virtually every society, and to establish universally applicable norms. They inquire into human rights violations affecting individuals, contact governments on an emergency basis, and report their findings and recommendations publicly. Mandates from the Commission on Human Rights, which are endorsed by the Economic and Social Council, authorise these mechanisms 'to seek and receive credible and reliable information from governments, the specialized agencies, and intergovernmental and *non-governmental organizations*' (emphasis added).

In fact, the mechanisms rely almost exclusively upon NGO information. Although there has been no detailed public accounting, some significant new indicators reveal how much NGOs fuel the special procedures of the Commission on Human Rights. At a June 1994 meeting of all special rapporteurs and experts serving on Working Groups of the Commission, the group appealed 'to non-governmental organizations whose work and information is crucial to human rights protection and to the effective discharge of our own mandates to continue providing us with relevant information and ideas ...'.¹³ The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, José Ayala Lasso of Ecuador, informed those at the meeting that he had established a 'human rights hot line' to enable emergency information to be dealt with rapidly. He stated that 'this faxline ... is used exclusively ... by victims of human rights violations or relatives or informed NGOs ...'.¹⁴ Amnesty International sends more than 500 such communications, covering thousands of cases, to the UN special procedures branch every year.¹⁵ Furthermore, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detentions reported in 1995 that 74% of the cases it took up in 1994 were brought by international NGOs, another 23% came from national NGOs, and 3% from families.¹⁶ The Special Rapporteur on Arbitrary Executions acknowledges the 'important' role of nongovernmental organisations in alerting the international community about summary executions, and the Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression describes the NGO contribution as 'primordial'.¹⁷

The thematic mechanisms and country rapporteurs are joined by six committees of experts that review and comment upon compliance with UN human rights treaties. Normally, only states that have ratified the treaties may appear before

the committee members to discuss their country reports on compliance.¹⁸ But even in committees from which they had been barred and their information challenged, NGOs long ago developed an *ad hoc* role for themselves by providing treaty committee members with the facts about the human rights record of countries scheduled to present reports. Committee members eagerly look for NGO materials before each country review, because it helps make their questioning more precise, factual, and less abstract. Nongovernmental organisations essentially serve as unofficial researchers to committee members, rendering invaluable aid in place of the understaffed, poorly-financed secretariat.

Since the Cold War ended, these treaty supervisory committees have begun to acknowledge their dependency upon NGO information. In 1994 the fifth coordination meeting of chairpersons of all human rights treaty committees concluded:

The chairpersons recommend that each treaty body examine the possibility of changing its working methods or amending its rules of procedure to allow non-governmental organisations to participate more fully in its activities. Non-governmental organizations could be allowed, in particular, to make oral interventions and to transmit information relevant to the monitoring of human rights provisions through formally established and well-structured procedures. In order to facilitate the participation of non-governmental organisations, the chairpersons recommend that information about States parties' reporting be made available ... [and] advance information on the topic of proposed general comments should be made available to encourage non-governmental organizations to provide input to the drafts ... Attention should be given to securing a stronger, more effective and coordinated participation of national non-governmental organisations in the consideration of States parties' reports.¹⁹

Governments are not as friendly to NGOs as these experts. Repressive countries have made prodigious efforts to keep UN human rights bodies weak, inadequately financed, and substantively marginalised. Because intimidation and reprisals are often directed against those who submit information to the United Nations, the Commission on Human Rights installed a 'prompt intervention' procedure to protect those threatened. In 1995 the commission concluded that 'all the alleged victims were private individuals or members of nongovernmental organisations which were or had been sources of information about human rights violations for United Nations human rights bodies'. The 1995 UN report identifies harassment of local human rights defenders in Guatemala, Colombia, Mexico, Argentina, Honduras, Peru, Rwanda, Burma, Zaire and Iran.²⁰

What are human rights NGOs?

Human rights organisations commonly identify their primary goals as monitoring and reporting of government behaviour on human rights, particularly violations, building pressure and creating international machinery to end the violations and to hold governments accountable. Other NGOs active on human rights issues may have considerably broader organisational goals such as religious organisations, trade unions, professional organisations, or groups concerned with refugees, children and others. But these nongovernmental organisations also devote substantial resources to human rights promotion and protection—sometimes

exclusively for their members, but often for all persons. Human rights organisations aim to be independent both of government and of partisan groups seeking political power.²¹

The proliferation of human rights NGOs since the mid-1970s makes it almost impossible to categorize them. Human rights NGOs often pursue differing aims, depending on their formal mandates, geographical location and preferred means of action.

The difficulties that such nongovernmental organisations encounter commonly reflect the weaknesses of national and international enforcement of the norms established in UN human rights treaties. The most effective NGOs have concentrated on establishing and operating instrumentalities at home and abroad that can ensure protection of the specific rights for each group that is the focus of attention. Sometimes, however, there is no international agreement about the norms themselves, for example minority rights or the right to housing, or how to implement them. In such cases, NGOs focus on codifying new norms.

To exacerbate matters—and the hostility with which some human rights NGOs are treated by international agencies and diplomats—national human rights organisations often address volatile issues that directly attack fundamental power relationships in their own societies. In some instances these are issues of physical integrity of the person such as ‘disappearances’, political killings, and torture; in others, they address questions of societal distribution of wealth, services and power. Commonly, national human rights NGOs also challenge governments on the issue of popular participation in decision-making. Because of the breadth of issues on the human rights agenda—among them are political, civil, social, economic and cultural rights, indigenous rights, collective rights and the right to self-determination—nationally based groups will often be viewed and behave as opponents to the government. In many instances human rights groups will consist largely of, or be dependent primarily upon, political opponents and exiles from a particular country.

Many national human rights NGOs link with international human rights NGOs, either as ‘affiliates’ or as national members of other international organisations that sometimes work on human rights issues. Sometimes, national groups formally take action within the UN. Yet many representatives of national groups function in the UN on their own and only occasionally under the aegis of the international group.

‘Dedicated’ or ‘exclusive’ human rights NGOs, particularly at the international level, have found that their ability to reduce violations is often advanced because they can concentrate solely on international norms, treaties and specific legal obligations, rather than taking on the complex causes of political and economic inequality.

Tactics utilised by human rights NGOs commonly focus on protecting individual victims of abuse through several means:

1. By *exposing the abuses* and mobilising shame through public advocacy to end the abuses and ameliorate conditions. This is perhaps the most common tactic adopted by such groups, and requires information gathering.
2. By *communicating with decisionmakers* at both the national and international

level in a variety of ways, either specifically to the abuse and victim, or generally with regard to the establishment of human rights norms, and with gradations between the two. Armed with precise information and communicated persuasively, human rights NGOs often set the agendas of the international organisations to address the issues they present.

3. By *delivering services* such as legal aid, training in public advocacy skills and including broad educational services so that individuals and groups will 'know their rights' and how to act upon them.

Access and effectiveness depend on deliberate policy choices related to NGO goals; skills and professionalism of staff; resources devoted to UN matters; informal relationships developed with UN personnel, independent experts and diplomats; and, in turn, the successes of the organisation and other nongovernmental organisations in building new UN mechanisms to respond to the inputs from NGOs.

The World Conference on Human Rights

All these approaches to NGO activism came together at the two-week June 1993 World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna. Representatives of 171 governments met 'upstairs', and thousands of NGO representatives passed through the 'downstairs' meeting rooms. These representatives were made up of national and international, analytic and activist, North and South, 'exclusive' human rights groups, as well as single-issue and broader purpose organisations. NGO Forum organisers reported that 2721 representatives of 1529 organisations attended the three-day meetings. Of these, the largest group of 426 organisations were from Western Europe; next came 270 Asian groups and another 38 from Australia/Oceania, 236 Latin American organisations, 202 African groups, 179 East and Central European groups and 178 North American organisations.²² There had never been a human rights meeting of this size.

Under the expanded access rules for the conference, an additional 1004 non-ECOSOC human rights NGOs had been invited to the official proceedings. According to the United Nations, 3691 representatives of 841 organisations actually attended as NGO observers, but only 248 of those organisations had ECOSOC consultative status.²³ Few had ever attended a United Nations meeting before. Many grew impatient with the NGO Forum Planning Committee, which represented international human rights organisations with long experience at the world body. Not unexpectedly, clashes ensued between the new, national NGOs and traditional international NGOs; between nongovernmental organisations and government organisers; among governments that advocated a fuller role and presence of NGOs in the drafting committee of the conference, and those that opposed it. There was a fundamental disjuncture between governments that wanted to strengthen UN human rights procedures and governments that wanted to deal them a death blow. When a deal brokered by the US delegation to permit nongovernmental organisations in the drafting rooms was unexpectedly and summarily overruled by the Brazilian chairman, NGO representatives serving on

some government delegations began to provide regular reports to the reconstituted NGO caucuses, gaining their input and involvement in turn.

There could not have been a more vivid contrast than that of the 'downstairs'—where a stream of NGO representatives put forward gruesome photos, horrifying videos and numerous reports—to the neat and clean 'upstairs', where the governments drafted a declaration. Despite the contradictions emerging within the NGO world, governments clearly understood that the groups had come to Vienna to demand action and challenge governments to do more than just debate.

Many issues were thrashed out at the conference and at its preparatory meetings. NGO ideas and priorities were well represented on two central questions—universality of human rights and establishment of a High Commissioner for Human Rights—and NGO presence and proposals heavily influenced the outcome.

Universality

Just before the World Conference on Human Rights, debate intensified on whether human rights norms are universal in scope and applicability or whether regional differences or 'particularities'—such as culture, tradition, religion or history—render some of the concepts invalid for non-Western regions. At sessions of the Non-Aligned Movement and regional preparatory conferences for Vienna, Asian governments advanced arguments favouring particularities. Because the UN's comparative advantage in human rights lies in its authority, global reach and capacity to speak as the sole universal intergovernmental body, the defence of universality became a central goal of the conference.

Indeed, every government that argued in favour of particularities at the Vienna Conference also paid lip service to the universality of human rights, noting that the rights are accepted by the international community. Iran, for example, stated that human rights are 'inherent in human beings ... [and] cannot be subject to cultural relativism'.²⁴ Indonesia, speaking as chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, cited 'our shared view on the universal validity of basic human rights'.²⁵ But those challenging universality also raised familiar arguments regarding national sovereignty and noninterference in the internal affairs of states, the pre-eminence of economic and social rights over civil and political rights, and the interests of the state over those of the individual. They challenged the validity of the UN's human rights machinery that criticises abusive actions by states.

The UN Secretary-General and government representatives defended universality. They were spurred on by thousands of NGO representatives and by the active presence of the international media. Vocal, visible and decisive support for universality came from nongovernmental organisations from the same countries that defend particularities. Representatives of such groups insisted that human rights were universal and rooted in the cultural, historical, religious and legal traditions of their own societies. They expressed impatience with arguments about particularities advanced by the very governments committing atrocious abuses—the same governments that sought to keep them out of the

conference proceedings. Ultimately, the NGOs succeeded in conveying the validity and importance of their message when the World Conference on Human Rights itself reaffirmed universality.²⁶

A High Commissioner for Human Rights

The 1994 establishment of a UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has raised hopes that the world body's capacity to respond to and stop serious violations of human rights will improve dramatically. On the UN's drawing boards since San Francisco, the precise idea for a high commissioner was shaped in 1963 by Jacob Blaustein in his Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial Lecture at Columbia University. The United States backed it; NGOs, particularly the International League for Human Rights, lobbied for it, convincing Costa Rica to introduce the proposal formally. Thereafter, the idea bounced back and forth between the Commission on Human Rights and the subcommission until the early 1980s, when it was stripped of substance by the subcommission and otherwise abandoned by the Reagan administration and others.

The approach of the World Conference on Human Rights revived the idea, which was ardently supported by nongovernmental organisations. Official satellite meetings convened by NGOs worldwide endorsed it. Amnesty International called for establishment of a 'Special Commissioner for Human Rights', noting that the term 'high commissioner' carried with it the baggage of British colonial nomenclature. Each of the three Third World regional preparatory meetings of governments was paralleled by a nongovernmental regional meeting; and each NGO session endorsed the idea of a high commissioner. At the official Latin American regional meeting, Costa Rica succeeded in obtaining endorsement by the governmental conference of a study of the feasibility of establishing the post.²⁷

By the time the fourth preparatory conference convened in Geneva in April 1993, US-based human rights NGOs, working in effective coalitions, had convinced the Clinton Administration to break with the Reagan-Bush policy of rejecting the need for a high commissioner on the grounds that enough high-level UN posts already existed. The Clinton Administration introduced this proposal at the fourth PrepCom—from which it emerged in 'brackets', signifying a lack of consensus. As the conference approached, few governments considered that the concept had any chance of survival, given the destructive mood of many rejectionist states. Predictably, the NGO Forum strongly endorsed the proposal for a high commissioner as 'a new, high-level independent authority within the United Nations system, with the capacity to act rapidly in emergency situations of human rights violations' and to ensure system-coordination and integration of human rights in all UN programmes.²⁸ About 60 top government officials, speaking to the plenary session of the Vienna Conference, referred to the concept. Some two-thirds favoured it, while most of the others—particularly those from Asia—called for 'further study' and cautioned about duplication of machinery and wasted resources. Hard and often creative negotiating was needed.

Lacking legislative power, the Vienna Conference did not create a high

commissioner for human rights. Instead, it invigorated the idea by recommending that the UN General Assembly, which has such authority, consider the establishment of this post as a matter of priority.²⁹ After a 10-year hiatus, the high commissioner was back on the agenda.

At the General Assembly in September 1993, President Clinton placed the full authority of the United States, and of his office, behind the idea, urging the United Nations to create the post of high commissioner 'soon and with vigor and energy and conviction'. The foreign ministers of Belgium (for the EU), Germany, Canada, Hungary, Russia, the Gambia, Costa Rica and Sweden also spoke in favour. Cuba, setting the tone for the opposition, cautioned that it should be 'considered without undue haste, which we could in the future regret'.

Nongovernmental organisations pressed for early action and for a strong mandate, and formed a New York-based working coalition to bolster support. At the centre of this were the Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights (recalling Blaustein's own early support), Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the International League for Human Rights, the International Federation for Human Rights, the International Human Rights Law Group, and the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights. Timely ideas, media commentaries, proposals and interaction with governments were strategic elements. There were comparatively few NGOs pursuing this issue in New York; and the frenzied pressure of Vienna, with Third World NGO presence, was absent. NGOs exerted pressure through strategic interventions, with the chair of the committee set up to consider the question, as well as through reports in the press and comments on various draft papers proposed by governments. Local sections and national affiliates of these groups were encouraged to intervene with their governments. The 'outside story' has been described by one participant, who emphasises the key NGO contributions during the drafting process and after the first High Commissioner was elected.³⁰

The high commissioner's mandate is less specific and less activist than the proposals of NGOs or supportive governments. Still, it is flexible enough to give hope that a committed human rights leader could shape the post in the direction that nongovernmental organisations favour. The high commissioner's specific responsibilities involve making recommendations to UN bodies for the promotion and protection of all rights, including the right to development; playing 'an active role' in the elimination and prevention of violations of human rights around the world; providing overall coordination of human rights activities throughout the United Nations system; enhancing international cooperation in human rights, including the provision of technical assistance; coordinating education and public information programmes in human rights; and rationalising, adapting and strengthening UN human rights machinery. He is based in Geneva, but is supposed to have an office in New York.³¹

NGOs have emphasised that protection of human rights must assume the central role in the high commissioner's strategic planning and actions. This envisions the high commissioner responding effectively to human rights violations, wherever they occur, through effective fact-finding, public reporting, and securing relief and redress for victims of violations.

Human rights field operations

Until recently UN efforts to report and take action against abuses were conducted from afar, through Geneva-based complaint procedures or reporting based largely on NGO information, with occasional short missions by UN special rapporteurs. The situation changed as the United Nations launched human rights operations as part of multifaceted peacekeeping operations in El Salvador and Cambodia, and sent a monitoring mission to Haiti. Conceived and run in New York, these human rights missions have opened the door to other on-site UN human rights field operations in peacekeeping, humanitarian emergencies and development activities. Since 1993 new human rights monitoring offices opened in former Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Guatemala. Additionally, the Vienna Conference has encouraged an array of UN-run technical assistance human rights programmes.

The relationship of human rights to UN peacekeeping operations of the post-Cold War era have largely reflected their traditional role as outsider advocate-critics. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have analysed the Salvador and Cambodia operations, relying on observations of locally-based NGO groups and their own field missions, offering hortatory action-orientated recommendations about the performance of UN human rights monitoring or policing personnel. These critiques are premised on the shared assumption that human rights factors must be central to the design and execution of the peacekeeping mandates in each of the field operations. Each analysis is itself an advocacy document for the sponsoring NGOs call for stronger UN on-site presence.³²

In spring 1995 two other New York-based human rights programmes issued book-length analyses of UN human rights field operations in El Salvador, Cambodia and Haiti.³³ With substantial detail on the planning, mandate, operation and implementation of each programme, these studies identify shortcomings and propose creating a special unit in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) at UN headquarters to ensure pre-mission planning, consistency and coordination across other departments, proper personnel training, appropriate relationships with local NGOs and due consideration for security. Like the earlier Amnesty International study, these reports emphasise the centrality of human rights in the design of peacekeeping mandates, particularly for those engaged in the post-conflict rebuilding of civic institutions.

Amnesty International has set forth human rights principles to be followed in designing all peacekeeping operations, calling for UN peacekeepers to be more than silent or indifferent witnesses, demanding that troops be impartial, properly trained and ready to uphold international law and to adhere to it in their own conduct as well. It does not yet offer detailed operational strategies with standard operating procedures suitable for use by soldiers or aid workers. None of the studies has yet explored such key issues as what procedures could advance on-site mission effectiveness without compromising security of mission personnel, or whether effectiveness depends more on being organisationally separate, or being integrated with the entire peacekeeping operation and its command. Neither has the United Nations itself.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights established a human rights

monitoring mission in Rwanda as a response to the 1994 genocide. Instrumental to this was effective advocacy by Human Rights Watch, directed both at the Security Council in New York and at the high commissioner in Geneva. The Human Rights Watch Committee's expertise on Rwanda, staff contacts with locally based Rwandan human rights defenders, and high-profile media-oriented reporting—aimed at New York but also at Paris—were key factors in their effective advocacy for an expanded presence by the United Nations. Amnesty International, whose earlier campaigns on Burundi evoked only modest government attention, also played a significant role on the Geneva side. It was the first to demand an emergency session on Rwanda of the Commission on Human Rights, which in turn appointed a special rapporteur who—like his predecessor in former Yugoslavia—pressed for the more active presence of human rights field monitors.

The Centre for Human Rights has virtually no field staff experience or operational capacity, which means that there is much to do. Just as its other mechanisms have been dependent upon NGOs, field operations will probably show a similar dependency until the financing and operational experience grow dramatically.

Several of the most senior officials engaged to run the UN human rights operations have been drawn from human rights NGOs, including Ian Martin (former head of Amnesty International) for Haiti, and Diego Garcia Sayan (Andean Commission of Jurists) and Reed Brody (International Human Rights Law Group) for Salvador. Many staffers dispatched to work on-site come to the United Nations with NGO backgrounds, often in the field. Local nongovernmental organisations are not part of the UN monitoring teams, and there has been criticism that they have been inadequately consulted and often patronisingly ignored.³⁴ Human rights NGOs will probably continue to be the principal sources of personnel for future UN human rights monitoring missions.

The high commissioner has identified the establishment and maintenance of an 'international roster of specialized staff' available at short notice for human rights field missions as one of the long-term needs for rapid and effective responses to serious human rights violations.³⁵ Many if not most of the human rights officers able to depart for such emergency assignments will be drawn from experienced NGOs.

New challenges face human rights NGOs in their advocacy at and through the United Nations, even as the mandates set forth by the world organisation shift. Despite the growth in procedures and mechanisms, and the expansion of human rights into peacekeeping and other UN operations, the tasks before them become more complex and require greater skills. No situation has brought this home more clearly than the experiences in Rwanda, where political, humanitarian and human rights priorities of the UN and many nongovernmental organisations on the scene often seemed to be at odds. London-based Africa Rights, whose director formerly headed Human Rights Watch/Africa, has outlined the cognitive and operational contradictions facing humanitarian NGOs, UN agencies and peacekeepers. Tackling the argument that humanitarian field operations must be 'neutral', Africa Rights points out the distinction between 'operational neutrality' and human rights 'objectivity', and the latter's necessary focus on and

solidarity with the victims of injustice and genocide.³⁶ In so doing, Africa Rights has challenged humanitarian NGOs to reassess their purpose and to develop new operational procedures that take account of the reality in which these groups operate and the principles of human rights that underlie UN humanitarian action.

Challenges ahead

There has been a continuing—some would argue, growing—backlash by several governments against legitimisation of the engagement of human rights NGOs in UN programmes, whether they are humanitarian, peacekeeping, development or the programmes of the Centre for Human Rights. Sometimes, such backlash takes the form of opposing fact-finding mechanisms or field missions. Often, governments launch transparent attacks upon NGO information by declaring the organisations to be politically motivated, or smearing them as ‘terrorists’. Ten years after its initial introduction, a UN draft declaration affirming the right of human rights NGOs to function continues to be delayed and diffused.

Since the Vienna Conference, priority has been placed on the development of technical assistance in human rights. Today, human rights NGOs seem on the verge of being offered the prospect of becoming ‘insiders’, working through and with the UN to achieve what has not been possible or desirable for them in the past—the delivery of legal services. Until now, programmes run by the Centre for Human Rights have purported to carry out such technical assistance, but have done so without working with or through local nongovernmental organisations. It is unclear whether international and national NGOs will join in this aspect of the UN’s work and whether, if they do, it will influence their independence, impartiality, and outspokenness.

The arrival of so many new national NGOs onto the UN human rights scene has raised questions about participation in meetings. Time pressures at the 1995 Commission on Human Rights led its Malaysian chair to reduce by half the speaking time of all participants—governments and NGOs alike. Some governments argue that this should diminish NGO ‘speechifying’ in favour of on-the-record debate and discussion among member states. Some nongovernmental organisations have proposed that new national groups and single-issue representatives coming to the commission must show more self-discipline by grouping their statements. Others report that government speeches have grown in number and length, and that further curtailment of NGO speeches will diminish their ability to bring out real facts and build public pressure.

The impact of nongovernmental organisations is now greatest as a source of independent information that triggers special mechanisms and engenders action by UN special rapporteurs. Human rights NGOs can so profoundly influence attentiveness to human rights in UN peacekeeping, humanitarian or technical assistance programmes that an ongoing operational role in these areas ranks with the submission of detailed complaints as more significant than NGO speeches and representational activities at the Commission on Human Rights, even though such activities maintain public pressure on governments for action.

Human rights NGOs have grown in size and number, have become increasingly professional, and are located across the world. Their information now receives

more acceptance and use within the UN system. As their impact grows, the political struggle waged against them—and against their access and legitimacy—intensifies. The strategic choices facing nongovernmental organisations include the issue of where to focus their resources: at home, on the core human rights reporting and action programmes in Geneva, or on the many operational programmes throughout the UN system, conceived and launched from New York. New coalitions are necessary for effectiveness throughout the UN system.

However, the political base is fragile, and the core activity for human rights NGOs in the UN remains effective interactions with the expert mechanisms of the Centre for Human Rights to build an early emergency response capacity. The great achievement of human rights NGOs has been to focus public attention on violations, mobilise outrage and maintain pressure for policy changes. Working with the high commissioner is one way to achieve this, but human rights NGOs will need to plan their strategies carefully to have an even greater system-wide impact on the United Nations.

Strategic, technical and organisational leadership in UN human rights programming has always come from the NGO sector. This must continue—to help prevent violations, to respond to those that occur and to make a reality of the hopes of those who fought so hard to ensure that human rights was one of the core purposes of the United Nations.

Notes

- ¹ Compare the draft language in Principle 25, UN Doc. A/CONF.157/PC/82, Fourth Preparatory Committee, World Conference on Human Rights, April 1993, and the final text in paragraph 38, Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, World Conference on Human Rights, June 1993.
- ² Bangladesh insisted that 'tribute' to NGOs be dropped from the draft PC/82; Pakistan called for excision of positive references to NGO contributions; Indonesia proposed that the call for 'facilitating' work of NGOs be replaced by the more passive code words 'cooperation' and 'dialogue'. See Jan Bauer, 'Report on the UN World Conference on Human Rights, 31 October 1993', unpublished manuscript. The final text also added a reference to national laws notoriously restrictive to human rights NGOs.
- ³ Joseph Proskauer, *A Segment of My Times*, New York: Farrar, Strauss, 1950, p 225.
- ⁴ See Sidney Liskofsky, *American Jewish Yearbook, 1945–46*, New York: American Jewish Committee, 1946, pp 491–492; Clark M Eichelberger, *Organizing for Peace*, New York: Harper and Row, 1977, pp 268–273; V Riesel, *New York Post*, 4 May 1945; and P Edson, *San Francisco News*, 16 May 1945.
- ⁵ Tom J Farer & Felice Gaer, 'The UN and human rights: at the end of the beginning', in: Adam Roberts & Benedict Kingsbury (eds), *United Nations, Divided World*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1993, p 248.
- ⁶ Roger S Clark, *A United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972.
- ⁷ See Jerome Shestack, 'Sisyphus endures: the international human rights NGO', *New York Law School Law Review*, XXIV, (1), 1978, pp 89–123; and 'UN Review of the League and Other NGOs', Memorandum of the International League for Human Rights, February 1978.
- ⁸ *United Nations Action in the Field of Human Rights*, New York: United Nations, 1988, pp 264–282. Also see Farer & Gaer 'The UN and human rights'.
- ⁹ See Iain Guest, *Behind the Disappearances: Argentina's Dirty War Against Human Rights and the United Nations*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990, pp 79–86 and *passim*.
- ¹⁰ See Shestack, 'Sisyphus' and 'Memorandum'.
- ¹¹ Nigel Rodley, *The Treatment of Prisoners Under International Law*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1987, p 196.
- ¹² David Kramer & David Weissbrodt, 'The 1980 Commission on Human Rights and the disappeared', *Human Rights Quarterly*, 1981.
- ¹³ UN Doc. E/CN.4/1995/5, para. 26 (h).
- ¹⁴ UN Doc. E/CN.4/1995/5/Add.1

- ¹⁵ Helena Cook, 'Amnesty International at the UN', forthcoming in: Peter Willetts (ed), *We the Peoples*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1995.
- ¹⁶ UN Doc. E/CN.4/1995/47, p 12, para 48.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 17, 52.
- ¹⁸ However, Article 45 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child provides that, in reviewing implementation of the Convention, 'the Committee may invite ... other competent bodies as it may consider appropriate to provide expert advice on the implementation of the Convention ...' This has been used to permit NGOs to interact actively with the treaty body.
- ¹⁹ UN Doc. A/49/537, 19 October 1994, para 41.
- ²⁰ UN Doc. E/CN.4/1995/53, para 6.
- ²¹ See Laurie S Wisberg, 'Human rights non-governmental organizations', in R Claude & B Weston, *Human Rights in the World Community*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992, pp 372-382; and Shestack, 'Sisyphus'.
- ²² Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights, 'World Conference on Human Rights', *NGO-Newsletter*, 4.
- ²³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ See Bauer, 'Report on the UN', pp 131-132.
- ²⁵ UN Doc. A/48/214, 4.
- ²⁶ Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA), UN Doc. A/CONF.157/23, Section I, para 5.
- ²⁷ UN Doc. A/CONF.157/58, 7.
- ²⁸ See UN Doc. A/CONF.157/7, 4.
- ²⁹ VDPA, II.B., para 18.
- ³⁰ Andrew Clapham, 'Creating the High Commissioner for Human Rights: the outside story', *European Journal of International Law*, 5, (4), 1994, pp 556-568.
- ³¹ See General Assembly Resolution A/Res/48/141.
- ³² See Americas Watch, *El Salvador-Peace and Human Rights: Successes and Shortcomings of the UN Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL)*, New York: Americas Watch, 2 September 1992; Human Rights Watch, *The Lost Agenda: Human Rights and UN Field Operations*, New York: Human Rights Watch, 1993, and Amnesty International, *Peacekeeping and Human Rights*, London, Amnesty International, January 1994.
- ³³ Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights, *Haiti. Learning the Hard Way. The UN/OAS Human Rights Monitoring Operation in Haiti, 1993-94*, New York: The Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights, 1995; and *Honoring Human Rights and Keeping the Peace: Lessons from El Salvador, Cambodia and Haiti*, New York: The Justice and Society Program, Aspen Institute, 1995.
- ³⁴ See Rakiya Omar & Alex de Waal, *Humanitarianism Unbound*, Working Paper No 5, London: Africa Rights, November 1994, pp 18-33.
- ³⁵ UN Doc. E/CN.4/1995/98/ paras 32, 23.
- ³⁶ Omar & de Waal, *Humanitarianism Unbound*.

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1996 - Volume 14 (2 issues). ISSN 0258-9001.

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NGOs and the UN system in complex humanitarian emergencies: conflict or cooperation?

ANDREW S NATSIOS

This article explores the evolving relationship between the United Nations (UN) system and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) in responding to complex humanitarian emergencies, and describes the two sets of actors, their organisational cultures, governance and mandates. It examines why the two sets of organisations have been drawn into a closer collaboration in dealing with civil conflicts and famines, how that interaction is working from both an operational and policy perspective and whether both are suited as currently constituted to respond to ongoing challenges. What are the unique institutional competencies and weaknesses each brings to relief responses? How is the friction between the UN and NGOs manifested in their diverse missions, operational styles and organisational cultures?

This essay focuses on operational and organisational cooperation between NGOs and the UN system, but not on the role of the military or the media in the humanitarian response system, subjects that have been well covered elsewhere.¹ Although operational NGOs in particular have been increasing their activity in policy and advocacy work in complex emergencies, this essay also does not address this work, which would require another essay in itself.

In Africa, the Balkans, the Middle East and the former Soviet Union, the growing number of failed states has produced a widening level of chaos to which NGOs and the UN have tried to respond. However, even the most charitable assessment must conclude that their responses have had mixed results. These complex humanitarian emergencies are defined by five common characteristics: the deterioration or complete collapse of central government authority; ethnic or religious conflict and widespread human rights abuses; episodic food insecurity, frequently deteriorating into mass starvation; macroeconomic collapse involving hyperinflation, massive unemployment and net decreases in GNP; and mass population movements of displaced people and refugees escaping conflict or searching for food. This instability does not respect national boundaries and frequently spills over into neighbouring countries, many of which are themselves unstable. The spreading chaos does not appear to be subsiding and presents the international community with a major challenge.

Some observers have argued that these emergencies have caused a shift of increasingly scarce resources away from sustainable development to life-saving humanitarian interventions. The amount of funding provided by the United States Agency for International Development (US AID) to UN organisations, the International Organization for Migrations (IOM), the International Committee of

the Red Cross (ICRC) and NGOs for relief interventions in complex humanitarian emergencies has risen dramatically beginning in the late 1980s. In 1989 the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and Food for Peace (FFP), both US AID offices, provided \$297 million in cash and food grants for humanitarian relief; by 1993 that had increased to \$1.2 billion.²

Funding for relief work is derived from four US government accounts: the OFDA, Title II of P.L. 480, Section 416 food aid (from the Department of Agriculture), and the refugee programme budget (in the State Department). Much of the actual increase during this period has been in food aid, which would probably not have been used for development purposes, and which is now in precipitous decline. These funds would not have been used for sustainable development, which is not as politically popular as disaster relief in the US Congress or among the American people. This ambivalence over development assistance is reflected in Washington's relative contribution to relief efforts compared to other developed countries. The USA proportionally provides the tenth highest level of relief assistance among OECD countries, although it trails at 20th place in development assistance. It is not that relief funding is so high, it is that development assistance is so low.³

A complex response system has evolved to spend this money and respond to these emergencies, more by accident than design; it is composed of three sets of institutional actors: NGOs, UN organisations and the International Red Cross movement.

Nongovernmental organisations

NGOs are perhaps the most complex and diverse of these three sets of actors, particularly those involved in complex humanitarian emergencies. Although there are 1500 NGOs registered with the UN system as having observer status, only 400 are registered with US AID, a process necessary for them to receive US government grants.⁴

When Operation Restore Hope was deployed to Somalia in December 1992, there were 40 international NGOs working in the country. In November 1993, 76 NGOs had mail boxes at the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) offices at the Rwandan refugee camps in Goma, Zaire.⁵ These NGOs were almost entirely based in the Western democracies. Although a mailbox in Goma is certainly an indication of some activity, these numbers are misleading. Many of these nongovernmental organisations provided services in Goma and Somalia on a modest scale for a few months and then left. Many others delivered gifts in kind—such as pharmaceuticals and clothing—to operational NGOs which then provided them to people in the refugee camps. Others are the national offices of the same international NGO: for example, Médecins Sans Frontières has national chapters in Spain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands, and members of these chapters worked together at Goma.

In short, most NGOs are not involved in relief. There are perhaps 20 in the USA and another 20 in Europe that work in complex emergencies. This work is sustained, technically sound and widespread enough to have an impact on the situation on the ground. Of these 40 NGOs, perhaps 10 US and another 10

European NGOs receive 75% of all the public funds spent by NGOs in complex emergencies. Ten US NGOs received 76% of all cash grants to NGOs for relief purposes from the US government in fiscal year (FY) 1993 and over 87% of all food aid for relief purposes in FY 1993.⁶ The European Union gave 65% of all relief grants to 20 nongovernmental organisations in FY 1994.

These relief NGOs frequently specialise in one or more of the five activities that are commonly understood to compose the relief discipline: food distribution, shelter, water, sanitation and medical care. To this may be added the rehabilitation efforts to bring a society traumatised by a complex emergency to minimum self-sufficiency: animal husbandry, agriculture and primary health care. Perhaps half of these NGOs perform relief work exclusively, whereas the other half work in both relief and development. The larger development NGOs (CARE, Catholic Relief Services, World Vision, Save the Children, and Oxfam/UK) have the added advantage in many complex emergencies of having had development programmes and staff to run them in the countries before the onset of the emergency. This advantage gives them a familiarity with the culture, ethnic groups and development programmes of the country as well as with indigenous staff.

Since the Ethiopian famine of 1985—a watershed event for most of the 10 major NGOs that work in relief—a quiet revolution has taken place in doctrine and practice between relief and development.⁷ Traditional relief efforts were commodity-driven and logistically-based, with little programmatic, economic or developmental thought given to how the relief effort might be more than simply pushing down death rates and saving lives. Most NGOs, as a matter of policy, will now try to integrate into their relief work developmental components particularly focused in agriculture, microenterprise, primary health care, reforestation and road construction. This is done through food or cash for which recipients are assigned a specific project that community leaders have determined is of longer-term importance in the area. Much more effort now is spent on examining the economics of what is happening in famine, with the major food NGOs conducting household, food price and market surveys as a regular part of their relief interventions. A recent study of the USAID/OFDA effort in the Somalia emergency showed that 50% of its relief grants to NGOs contained developmental interventions.⁸

NGOs derive their financial support from both public and private sources. A few will accept no public sector money, while others get between 60%–70% of their income from donor governments.⁹ Although UN funds and programmes have increasingly been making relief grants to NGOs, these grants do not yet approach the level of donor government grant assistance, a condition that may shortly change if present trends continue. NGO private funding resources come primarily from mass media appeals (most notably television), direct mail and major donor government contributions. US law requires an NGO to raise at least 20% of its aggregate resources privately to be eligible to apply for government funding. Most donor governments have created disaster relief offices—such as Agency for International Development's OFDA, Food for Peace and the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) of the European Union—to provide grant assistance to NGOs, the ICRC and UN organisations.

How these NGOs are organised and governed affects their work. They have chosen four models to organise themselves internationally. First, all began and some remain with one headquarters based entirely in one country, even though they work internationally in others, for example, the International Rescue Committee and the International Medical Corps. Second, some have many autonomous national chapters with independent field organisations, each reporting back to the home offices. This means several offices may work independently of each other in the same country, for example Save the Children and Oxfam. Third, some have chosen to create many national fund-raising offices that pool their collective funds and spend them through a single worldwide field organisations, which is indigenously staffed and managed, such as World Vision International and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. A variation of this is a hybrid of the second and third models, in which each national headquarters has its own field organisation but is assigned specific emergencies in which to work by a central international organisation to avoid competition in the same country, e.g. CARE. Fourth, others only work through indigenous local NGOs that are not part of their organisational structure; they have no independent operational capacity in the field outside such indigenous partner agencies as the Church World Service, Oxfam/US, and Christian Children's Fund.

Each model has particular advantages and drawbacks. The first model tends to be the fastest in operations and decision making and the least bureaucratic; the second tends to be the most flexible, internally competitive and, at times, organisationally contentious; the third tends to have deeper community roots and capacity to aggregate large amounts of money rapidly for a particular relief programme; and the fourth has the deepest community roots but does not have a field staff that it may direct to a particular emergency and so lacks flexibility and quality control.

NGOs are governed by boards of directors that tend to reflect the particular culture, history and mandates of the organisations concerned. The board of directors of the International Medical Corps, a US NGO that specialises in emergency medical care in conflict, for instance, has been dominated by the medical professionals who founded it. Catholic bishops serving on the board of directors of Catholic Relief Services is another example. Since most NGOs raise money among a particular market segment of the American people, they must design their field programmes around the interests of their constituency or they may not survive. Under the NGO standards required by InterAction (the American nongovernmental organisation partnership association) of its 160 members, NGO bylaws must provide for term limits to ensure rotation of board members, require some racial and gender diversity, avoid appointing relatives of NGO executives, and limit the number of senior staff who serve on their boards. A similar set of standards exists for European and Third World NGOs which are members of the International Council of voluntary Agencies (ICVA), the European equivalent of InterAction. Most major relief NGOs belong to either of these two associations and most try to conform to these standards. Their boards of directors approve annual budgets; hire; review and fire the chief executive officer; and control major corporate policy decisions. Some are involved in operations, approving,

for example, each new programme initiative and advocacy position on public policy taken by the organisation.

The rash of recent emergencies has created the impression that NGOs are in the business of ambulance chasing as they appear on the scene in large numbers to provide assistance. This impression is somewhat accurate. To attract private contributions to run their programmes, the NGOs must make use of news events and media coverage, which raise public awareness in a way that no paid advertisement could ever achieve. The more dramatic the event, the greater the media coverage, and the greater the ease of fundraising around it. Overhead rates for nongovernmental organisations are one of the few constant measures of success used to judge their worthiness as charities in the annual rankings of NGO efficiency in such publications as *Money Magazine* and the *Wall Street Journal*. These rankings affect NGO fundraising success in a self-reinforcing cycle that ultimately puts a high premium on early and visible involvement in relief operations. Fundraising around highly visible humanitarian crises raises more money at a lower cost than any other form of advertising or publicity. Certain NGOs have been attacked for what some critics call 'relief pornography'—raising money by showing scenes of starving children that wrench the donor's heart and portray a sense of helplessness. This distorts an organisation's judgment on where to work and when, but it is not an easily addressed problem since without funding they cannot work at all.

Nongovernmental organisations are accountable to their boards, but accountability to their contributors and beneficiaries is more tenuous. Unlike a profit-making business where customers can judge the quality of the service or product that they have purchased, the beneficiaries of the NGO contributions in a relief intervention have no regular way of registering individually their approval or dissatisfaction to donors of an organisation, or for that matter ICRC or UN performance. Likewise, private donors have no direct experience with the quality of the work that their contributions support. Good marketing does not necessarily ensure good programming. As a general proposition, NGOs make an effort in good faith—given the altruistic motivation of most of their workers and managers—to involve the people they serve in the field with how resources are spent. Community participation is an elemental axiom of NGO work. The wide variation in the quality of field programmes and the technical competence of staffs is a testament to the limitations of the existing system of accountability. Larger NGOs—the combined budgets of CARE, World Vision and Catholic Relief Services, the three largest NGOs, exceed \$1 billion—have developed many of the management information, evaluation and control systems of private sector corporations to monitor quality in their projects.

Perhaps the most encouraging recent trend in the NGO community has been the growing presence of indigenous nongovernmental organisations working in their own countries to provide services during complex emergencies. In Liberia, during the worst period of chaos in the capital city, Monrovia, in the summer and autumn of 1990, all UN agencies, international NGOs, and even the ICRC had evacuated. The only Western presence at the time was a team of five operational staff from OFDA to run a relief effort to feed and provide medical care to 500 000 people in desperate conditions as four undisciplined militias fought for control

of the city. The OFDA team enlisted the support of the local community to run the relief effort by forming an indigenous Liberian NGO that effectively distributed food, water and medical services. While the OFDA team withdrew six months later, the indigenous NGO did not and it continues its work today. The ICRC formed Somali women's committees to run hundreds of open air soup kitchens in Somalia in 1992, which fed hundreds of thousands of people during the worst of the chaos. These women's committees, independent of the ICRC, resurrected the moribund school system of Mogadishu and put 500 teachers and 20 000 students back in the classroom by using ICRC food aid to pay the teachers. The World Food Programme (WFP) worked with CARE and gave grants of local currency generated by the monetisation of food aid in Somalia in 1993 and 1994 to local Somali NGOs, which from all reports were quite effective on smaller scale projects. Bosnian Muslim NGOs have been the most effective in providing assistance during the conflict because they have been willing to take risks that international NGOs would never consider. Also they know the terrain and feel the suffering themselves. These indigenous NGOs are perhaps the fastest growing part of the relief response system and provide an intuitive understanding of local conditions that international NGOs could not hope to equal.

The UN system

Four UN organisations have become such visible players in most complex humanitarian emergencies that describing their functions and mandates will describe most if not all of the operational work of the entire UN system in relief operations. They are the World Food Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The first three are clearly the strongest and most indispensable. Although UNDP technically has the mandate to manage UN emergency operations in the field, it has been unwilling or perhaps unable to manage and technically fulfil its assigned role, and it has not distinguished itself by the work it has done either in quality or speed. The creation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) in the UN secretariat in December 1991 to coordinate UN work in complex emergencies is testimony to UNDP's failure—coordination had been the assigned task of the UNDP for two decades. A half dozen other UN agencies, seeing the movement of donor resources to complex emergencies, have flung themselves into the organisational chaos, but they arguably lack serious operational capacity or experience, and have only limited relief resources.

The WFP functions as the food aid agency of the UN system, providing a central coordinating role in developing crop production estimates, food aid requirements and logistics planning for major relief operations. At \$1.8 billion its annual budget is the largest of the big four. It signed its first worldwide NGO cooperative agreement for relief operations in February 1995 with Catholic Relief Services and it is now engaged in negotiations over similar agreements with three other NGOs. WFP has had only a limited history of work with international NGOs, a historical reality that it is fast overcoming. Although WFP is organisationally subordinate to the United Nations and the Food and Agricul-

ture Organization (FAO), it has become virtually independent since the 1991 reforms.

UNICEF's special mandate is to focus on the relief and development needs of women and children, which has made it the focal point among the big four UN agencies for emergency medical interventions, mass inoculation campaigns for children, water and sanitation programmes and therapeutic feeding programmes for severely malnourished children in emergencies. This work has placed it for some time in closer contact with NGOs at the village level than any other of the big four organisations. UNICEF is the only one of the UN entities with a substantial popular following in donor countries and a contributor base that provides significant private support for its work.

UNHCR has the longest history of the big four funds and programmes; its predecessor was created during the 1920s under the League of Nations. It also has the longest history of work with NGOs and spends the largest amount of money—at least \$300 million annually—in grants to 130 NGOs, many of them indigenous. Although the bulk of its funding still goes to host governments to run refugee camps, the rush of events and the need for speed has made the NGO-UNHCR partnership more intimate and frequent in recent years, particularly in complex emergencies.¹⁰

UNDP, the development programme of the UN system, does only limited work with international or indigenous NGOs in emergencies. By tradition, as well as General Assembly guidelines, the UNDP resident representative in each country normally acts as the UN's resident coordinator with pre-eminent executive authority to coordinate other UN agencies. This authority also extends to disasters, although UNDP field representatives have been remarkably unprepared and unwilling to perform this function, with a few notable exceptions, for example Michael Priestley's strong leadership in Sudan during the civil war as UNDP resident representative was of consistently high quality. UNDP has occasionally funded certain public service projects in complex emergencies, such as managing airport facilities, city water and electrical systems, and other public services needed to support life, particularly in urban areas. The UNDP niche in the provision of public services in complex emergencies is the least developed and most needed of functions of the UN system.

The International Red Cross system

The International Red Cross movement arose out of the horrific conditions on the battlefield at Solferino in 1859, and its mandate has now been extended to alleviate suffering during conventional armed conflicts. The movement is the oldest, most disciplined and best organised of the three sets of actors of the international relief response system, with a worldwide budget of about \$600 million. The ICRC also conveys family messages across conflict lines, reunites families separated by war and protects prisoners of war.¹¹ Its budget is primarily funded by annual block grants from donor governments, and to a lesser degree national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, in much the same way as the UN funds and programmes obtain their funding. The ICRC operates under a set of inviolate principles that have been integrated into the nine governing principles

of the national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies. These include absolute political neutrality in a conflict; indeed, the Red Cross symbol is the visual embodiment of the principle of neutrality in war. ICRC operating procedures require that they work on both sides of any armed conflict and that they respond to and practise complete transparency in all operations, notifying both sides each time a convoy departs, arrives or is delayed. These procedures sometimes put them at odds with NGOs and the UN agencies, and it encourages their insularity as an organisation, although their rules make it possible for them to work in armed conflicts where few other institutions dare go.

The age, doctrine, funding mechanism and mandates of the ICRC set it apart from both the UN system and the NGO community. Other than UNHCR, no other humanitarian relief organisation has a mandate assigned to it under international law, as are the cases of UNHCR under the UN Charter and the ICRC under the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols. The ICRC is an international organisation, not an NGO, and yet it is outside the UN system. As an international organisation, the ICRC more jealously guards its autonomy and prerogatives than any of the other institutional actors—UN or NGO—and resists coordination, but it shares information, sometimes reluctantly, and will attend organising meetings. For the most part, however, it must be discussed separately from either nongovernmental or intergovernmental organisations.

Collaboration of NGOs with the 'big four'

The collaboration of NGOs and the major four funds and programmes active in the humanitarian arena has increased dramatically over a short time. In most complex emergencies, host governments do not exist or exist in such anaemic form that they are ineffective as an interlocutor for the UN system, which deals with NGOs increasingly as the first responders. UN agencies have traditionally focused their attention on governments, their primary constituency, while NGOs focus on grassroots development at the village level and cooperate with developing country governments only at the regional or provincial level during emergency operations. Under this traditional paradigm, UN agencies viewed NGOs as subcontractors in a clearly subordinate position—paid for services performed—not as equal partners with unique capacities, particularly in humanitarian relief operations. This has caused the resentment by UN agencies of nongovernmental organisations when they do not act in the way expected, and by NGOs when they are treated as contractors rather than equal partners.

The UN system and the NGO community have made some progress at improved collaboration as the international humanitarian response system has matured. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs initiated monthly coordination meetings with NGOs in New York and Geneva to exchange information and discuss policy disputes in complex emergencies. UNHCR is well under way with its Partnership in Action (PARINAC) initiative to develop an operational and policy framework for working with NGOs. In complex emergencies, UN field offices have provided a natural coordination mechanism for nongovernmental organisations and UN organisations that has at least improved the exchange of information among the response agencies.

This recent UN and NGO marriage is more a relationship of convenience arranged by the press of events and overbearing donor governments than a passionate romance. The partners remain distrustful and moody when working together and are uncomfortable with the contrived arrangement. This discomfort is not based on an absence of familiarity with one another; they have good reason to be uncomfortable. The two sets of institutions compete for scarce donor government resources, speak to quite different constituencies that are frequently hostile to each other, recruit different kinds of people to work for them and move at distinctly different speeds. One institution measures success by whether host governments are pleased, the other by whether public and private donors are happy. One is more centralised, the other highly decentralised. NGO field directors generally have much more authority over the programme and management than their UN field counterparts, a situation about which many of the latter complain a great deal. One encourages risk-taking (some would argue cowboyism) and informality; the other advocates regular procedures and bureaucratic propriety. There are some overlapping functional claims between UN organisations and NGOs in complex emergencies, which means turf wars over competing roles and mandates. The UN system is more feudal than integrated, while the four agencies work essentially independently of one another.

While UN agencies and NGOs may wish for a discrete divorce or at least separation, in the chaos of complex emergencies they need each other more than they may want to admit. Each brings unique mandates and potential competencies to the relief response discipline, which are essential if collapsed societies are to be assisted in restoring some measure of self-sufficiency. The challenge now is to reach a consensus about who does what best to clarify institutional mandates and limitations, and better define roles.

As a general proposition, NGOs do their relief and development work at the grassroots level, which is labour intensive from a staff perspective, both expatriate and indigenous. Thus, they tend to have large field staffs that can carry out complex operations in remote areas. Philosophically, they are committed to empowering people at the lowest level of social organisation—the family and the village—to work collectively towards the sort of social and economic services that would typically be run by municipal government; however, NGOs are sometimes inconsistent in following their own ideology. Some services succeed more than others. These include community-based health care, primary and secondary education, agricultural extension work, water and sanitation projects, small-scale enterprise typically through cooperatives or small loans, road and bridge construction, and environmental programmes, particularly reforestation. These are the same operational and sectoral skills NGOs use in their relief response operations.

These strengths are at the same time weaknesses. The greatest single endemic weakness of NGOs is their reluctance to cede managerial or programme autonomy towards the goal of greater strategic coherence or managerial efficiency. Most lack either the will or the self-discipline to surrender autonomy and integrate their work with other actors. Their focus on the village and neighbourhood has been at the expense of dealing with national problems of governance, economic reform, planning and policy—which, when done badly, can cancel out overnight

any grassroots successes their programmes may have enjoyed. NGOs have a problem of scale in their field programmes; they produce patches of green in barren landscapes, patches that are small, fragile and usually unconnected to each other.

UN funds and programmes are comparatively weak in field operations, with a modest presence usually in the country capital. They work under the UN Charter with the host government in each country. Most UN assistance then moves through host government ministries where UN organisations cultivate relationships with senior policy makers and managers. They are not heavily involved with grassroots organisations, with the possible exception of UNICEF because of the nature of its mandate. This means that the UN is much more familiar with central government bureaucracies and public services than most NGOs.

These two quite different sets of NGO and UN missions mean that when countries sink into civil war or ethnic conflict, their relief roles not unnaturally reflect their missions and unique competencies; they do what they know best. The UN tries to negotiate country-wide access in conflict areas, exemptions from customs duties for relief commodities and protection agreements for relief workers from the violence of the conflicts—essential tasks at which NGOs have little experience or success. UN agencies are reluctant to violate the sovereignty of any of the organisations constituencies and member states. This recalcitrance is not merely a function of the UN Charter, but also the prejudice of some UN staff, who are drawn from the educated elites of developing countries and retain a suspicion of Western colonial ambitions reasserting themselves under the guise of humanitarian interventionism. Only when the Security Council has voted for resolutions permitting a violation of state sovereignty will the system respond. NGOs have fewer inhibitions, except where they are working on both sides of a conflict and risk censure or danger from the national government. In fact, NGOs have violated state sovereignty over extended periods of time in at least four civil wars in Africa, Iraq and Bosnia. This same paradigm functions with respect to advocacy on human rights and diplomatic issues: UN staff are hesitant to criticise publicly a member state during a civil war, while NGOs do this more often in the context of their normal advocacy efforts.

There have been four reform efforts over the past three years to force UN agencies to work in a more cohesive and integrated way in complex emergencies. These reforms may have the combined effect of encouraging the UN system to design a single defined strategy in each complex emergency. NGOs look, however reluctantly, to the UN to provide some measure of operational coordination during complex emergencies, and these reforms strengthen the UN's capacity for doing so.

This coordination function was the major rationale for the creation of the DHA, led by an under-secretary general in New York, the first of these reforms. Although DHA has made some progress in fulfilling its mandate, there are intrinsic institutional limitations built into the UN system itself that make this task unenviable. Although the secretary-general (to which the under-secretary general who heads DHA reports) has legal authority over the big four UN programmes, they do what they want in practice. Their policy, budgets, person-

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Publisher: Deutsches Orient-Institut, Hamburg

Editor: Udo Steinbach

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ORIENT is published three-monthly. Price per issue DM 35,-, annual subscription DM 116,- plus postage

LESKE VERLAG & BUDRICH GMBH

Postfach 300 551, 51334 Leverkusen/Germany



power to force integration of UN organisations. It is, however, a step in the right direction.

Conclusion

Perhaps the single most serious challenge to the international community is developing and implementing strategies for dealing with failed states or preventing their collapse in the first instance. There is by no means a consensus among donor governments, NGOs, the ICRC and UN agencies on the need for a unified strategy in each complex emergency. Some argue that a thousand flowers should bloom and every agency should do its own thing. Information is shared reluctantly if donors insist, but nothing more. Given the gap between resources and needs, resources need to be leveraged to increase their influence. Conflicting strategies and objectives, or their abysmal absence, in complex emergencies with multiple actors frequently cancel each other out. Conversely, a single coherent strategy could allow the aggregation of sufficient resources to change the course of a conflict. Without clear objectives, the managers of the international response system will never know whether they have achieved their goals. Such achievements could convince wary parliamentarians, media and public opinion in donor countries that the heavy investment of public funds in relief response serves some successful purpose other than just keeping people alive so that they can die later. Given the declining donor resources for development and reconstruction after conflicts, as many developmental components as possible need to be built into relief responses. All these arguments suggest the need for a single unified strategy. Neither NGOs nor UN agencies are in a position to impose this sort of discipline. DHA, which might logically be charged with such a mission, has neither the political clout nor the resources to inject some discipline into this unruly, feudal response system.

While the UN system and particularly DHA will argue that their coordination work in complex emergencies amounts to a strategic plan, few of the actors—UN organisations or NGOs—wish to be coordinated, much less conform to a single strategy. Coordination has many meanings in management theory. In the present context of complex emergencies, it has become a mechanism for combining the wish lists of the UN and NGO relief agencies, even if the programmes have little chance of being funded, or even contradict each other. It can become a lowest common denominator rather than a higher standard of policy or performance. Coordination in this context is not particularly helpful. It certainly does not solve the strategy problem.

Even if all actors in the response system agreed that some unified strategy were essential, one serious impediment remains. The highly decentralised, feudal nature of the response system itself is made up of the UN system, with three central headquarters staff directorates in the secretariat (humanitarian affairs, peacekeeping operations and political affairs); the big four UN organisations (UNDP, UNICEF, WFP and UNHCR); 40 major relief NGOs; the ICRC (and the Red Cross Movement, which is an organisationally discrete entity); the military units

making up international forces (all of which report back operationally to their military command structures in their home countries rather than to the UN force commander in the field); the US State Department and foreign ministries of other interested countries; and the foreign disaster response offices of donor countries (OFDA and ECHO). If one were present at the creation of this Byzantine system, one could not have created a more complex and convoluted structure.

Wildavsky and Pressman argue persuasively that the more organisational entities involved in a decision-making process, the greater the opportunity for delay, if not paralysis.¹² They point out that the mathematical probability of reaching a decision on a public policy issue is quite low when dozens of organisations have veto power or the power to delay a decision. Maximum feasible participation in decision making, given the lengthy list of actors, equates to operational chaos, deadly delay and inevitable failure in disaster response. It is noteworthy that the most successful humanitarian response effort in the post-Cold War era—Kurdistan in 1991—initially involved no UN organisations or UN peacekeeping forces but rather three military commands that had just fought in the Gulf War together, one donor country response office and no more than half a dozen NGOs. Limited organisational participation in this context translated into operational success.

Absent is a complete reorganisation of the relief response structure, which is politically and administratively infeasible and perhaps even undesirable from a policy perspective, but we must focus on incremental reform of the existing humanitarian order. The most feasible and salutary changes that might now be made would be to aggregate relief actors within each organisational sector. The United Nations would centralise authority for the formulation of a single UN strategy in one entity, which after all was the original concept behind DHA. NGOs would similarly organise themselves through InterAction and ICVA. Donor disaster response offices would do the same. Then a small group of representatives, one for each set of actors (UN, NGO, ICRC, military representatives if peacekeeping troops were involved and donor aid agencies), could meet and design a strategy. This ultimately would involve a workable entity of no more than half a dozen people. Any serious attempt at aggregation would require a commitment by the actors to would cede much organisational autonomy, something that is now jealously guarded. Such structural reform would require a high degree of organisational discipline and perhaps even some sanctions for organisations which refuse to participate in good faith. This reform stretches even the most expansive definition of coordination, perhaps the most abused and ill-defined word in the disaster response vocabulary. It is perhaps the best we can do under the circumstances.

The response system cannot continue to function as it does now; it is on the verge of breakdown. With the exception of military forces, all the organisations are seriously overcommitted in coping with the demands being placed on them. The rolling tide of complex emergencies is moving so rapidly that organisations have been drawn into each new major crisis before completing work on the last. The emotional toll that these emergencies are taking on relief staff cannot be calculated quantitatively, but it is significant. What is the psychological toll on staff watching the genocide in Rwanda or the atrocities in Bosnia? This has

meant that NGOs and UN organisations are increasingly sending inexperienced staff to the field to run massive operations that even seasoned managers would find intimidating. This work is not a nine-to-five, Monday to Friday job. A rationalisation of the existing response system would progress some way towards relieving at least some of the organisational stress at a time when institutions are at a breaking point. More importantly, these reforms would increase, but not guarantee, the chances for designing successful strategies for managing and perhaps resolving these crises.

The marriage of convenience between NGOs and the UN system in relief responses over time may become comfortable enough that *ad hoc* arrangements will work, even if a passionate love affair never occurs. For most NGOs and most UN organisations, the marriage is a recent affair, beginning sometime over the last half decade. The organisational cultures are understanding each other better, perhaps at times even respecting each other. Given the horrific circumstances in the field in which this marriage of convenience has been consummated, problems are hardly surprising. Both sets of actors need each other, and that organisational need may be the key to the success of the relationship. The rationalisation of the design and execution of a unified strategy will increase the chances for success of the responses to complex emergencies. Nothing works better than success—however it is defined—to cement a partnership. There have been precious few successes, which has resulted in name-calling and finger-pointing among the actors. Success encourages collaboration and cooperation, failure discourages it. As the system matures, the marriage of convenience may ultimately work, but it will take time and patience.

Notes

¹ See Jonathan Benthall, *Disasters, Relief and the Media* (London: Tauris, 1993); and Andrew Natsios, 'International humanitarian response system', *Parameters*, Spring 1995, pp 68–81.

² See *Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance Annual Report, FY 1991*, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1991 pp 8–9. However, little of this increased funding was initiated by the Bush Administration, with the exception of the Kurdish emergency, where a special appropriation was requested. Congress offered the increased funding in the face of escalating disasters frequently in special appropriations outside the budget cycle. Without this rising tide of emergencies, appropriations for development assistance would have been no higher. Development assistance has never been a particularly popular programme in the US Congress, but disaster relief (cash and food) continues to enjoy broad congressional and public support across party and ideological divides. In the case of food assistance for relief, much of the additional resources for complex emergencies has come from the Section 416 programme of the US Department of Agriculture, food aid which would probably not have been programmed for development purposes. With the depletion of Section 416, surplus stocks in FY 1993 and changes in the agricultural price supports that ensure that this depletion will not be restocked, increased food aid for emergencies will undoubtedly come at the expense of food for development under Title II of the Office of Food for Peace. The World Food Programme's (WFP) relief and development programmes have traditionally received equal shares of resources until the late 1980s when an appreciable shift began. At present, relief receives two-thirds of total resources, while the rest is programmed to development. This increased food aid for relief has not resulted in an actual decline in food aid for development; relief resources pledged by donor governments have increased markedly.

³ See Department of Humanitarian Affairs rankings of ODC countries response to consolidated humanitarian appeals.

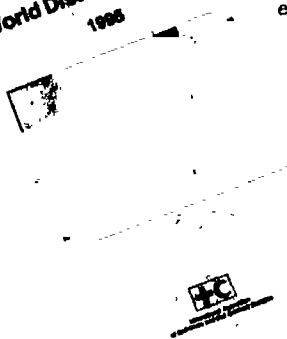
⁴ See AID 1994 Annual Report, entitled *Voluntary Foreign Aid Programs, Bureau for Humanitarian Response*, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1994, pp 70–97.

⁵ I visited the UNHCR headquarters at Goma in November 1994 and counted the mailboxes.

- ⁶ This figure is an estimate based on the grant-making experience of OFDA and the Office of Food for Peace. Four NGOs (CARE, Catholic Relief Services, World Vision and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency) received 87% of all NGO food aid grants for relief and development under Title II of P.L. 480. See Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance rankings of cash grants to NGOs for FY 1993.
- ⁷ See Mary Anderson & Peter Woodrow, *Rising From the Ashes: Disaster Response to Development*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press), 1989.
- ⁸ See Refugee Policy Group, *Humanitarian Aid in Somalia: The Role of the Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) 1990-1994*, Washington, DC: Refugee Policy Group, November 1994, p 27.
- ⁹ *Voluntary Foreign Aid Programs*, pp 70-97.
- ¹⁰ UN High Commissioner for Refugees, *Refugees*, 97, 1994, p 8. This issue is devoted to NGOs and UNHCR, with particular emphasis on PARINAC.
- ¹¹ See International Committee of the Red Cross, *ICRC 1993 Annual Report*, Geneva; ICRC, 1993, pp 273, 277.
- ¹² Aaron Wildavsky & Jeffrey Pressman, *Implementation*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1979, pp 105-108, 147.

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VOL. 1 No. 1 • WINTER 1991

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ISSN: 1072

The bureaucracy and the free spirits: stagnation and innovation in the relationship between the UN and NGOS

ANTONIO DONINI

The emergence of nongovernmental organisations (NGOS) in national and international society is a significant development of the last two decades. The theoretical and practical implications of how this sea change affects the functioning of the international system are analysed elsewhere in this issue. Suffice it to say here that the United Nations (UN), despite the fact that it is a polity of states, is one of the privileged venues for this escalating dialectical relationship between states and non-states. New issues and actors are knocking at the UN's door. It is no longer possible to keep them out; if the door is locked they will come in through the window or the cracks in the floor. There is no single area of UN activity that is not in some way shaped or touched by this relationship. Interactions between the world institution and the variegated torch-bearers and stakeholders of civil society express themselves in a multitude of ways. Not surprisingly, it is the informal interactions rather than the formal variety that are the most interesting; the outside world has been changing much faster than the official rule book can record. In fact, an increasing number of protagonists are ignoring the rule book altogether or have never even heard of its existence.

The aim of this essay is to throw some light on the changing institutional interactions between the rapidly evolving 'NGO galaxy' and the not-so-rapidly evolving 'UN solar system'. It examines what is new in the process—how a structured bureaucracy deals with the unstructured, and how ideas percolate from one to the other. It also looks at how formal and informal linkages are created, and how practical cases of cooperation have evolved. The emphasis is on innovation rather than inertia. The selection of illustrative material is by no means exhaustive, shaped more by personal experience than scholarly research. Some general considerations about the meaning of recent shifts in policy and practice are offered as conclusions. The vantage point is that of the bureaucrat who looks upon the free spirits with a mixture of admiration (often) and irritation (sometimes), but who recognises that the Temple of States would be a rather dull place without nongovernmental organisations.

Changes at the top

The basic rule book is Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution 1296. Adopted in 1968, this resolution acts as gatekeeper and grants formal access, or

consultative status, to NGOs. Procedures have changed little over the years, and it is not necessary to describe them here.¹ Changes may, however, be in the offing. The widespread recognition that these procedures, and those relating to NGO participation in international conferences, need a face lift has led to the establishment of an Open-Ended Working Group of ECOSOC. The working group met in June 1994 and in the spring of 1995. At the time this essay was written, a draft revision of Resolution 1296 had been tabled but not yet approved.² Whatever the final language, the new resolution is likely to take some stock of the changes in the relationship that have taken place in the past 27 years. The new text may give a clearer recognition of the two-way interaction between the UN and NGOs rather than continuing to consider, somewhat paternalistically as the present wording implies, the NGO community mainly as a channel to disseminate UN policies and information.

The fact that the floodgates were opened at the Rio Conference on Environment and Development has been significant for this process. 'Competent and relevant' NGOs, whether in consultative status or not, were invited to become accredited (over 1 400 were accredited, the largest number at any UN conference). More importantly, NGOs played a significant role in shaping the agenda of the conference and in the international mobilisation around the concept of sustainable development. They also contributed to building the political consensus that made adoption of the Rio Declaration possible. Nongovernmental organisations were rewarded for this role in chapter 27 of Agenda 21, which gave full recognition to the role of 'major groups' in implementing and monitoring the agenda; it further emphasised the vital role played by NGOs in shaping and implementing participatory democracy. Another interesting development occurred after the conference. The General Assembly and ECOSOC adopted resolutions governing participation of NGOs in the work of the new Commission on Sustainable Development,³ which allowed NGOs that had been accredited to the conference to be granted near automatic roster status. As a result, 550 NGOs were accredited (about half of the NGOs accredited to UNCED that were not in consultative status with ECOSOC). The consultative status machinery was bypassed, and this created an important precedent.

The Rio example is a clear demonstration of the crucial role that NGOs can play as policy shapers in an intergovernmental setting. So far, this is 'the closest approximation to direct popular participation'⁴ that the UN has been able to accommodate. Other, less visible approximations are happening all the time. For example, both the preparatory work towards and the reporting on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child owe a lot to NGO action. The convention gives a unique monitoring role to 'other competent bodies' in recognition of the fact that despite its intergovernmental nature, many other actors are involved in realising the rights enshrined in the convention.⁵

The United Nations has no institutional or even informal framework for citizen representation and no political forum for the world's peoples. Other segments of the UN system have long been more advanced in this respect. The International Labour Organisation (ILO), thanks to its constitutional links with trade unions and its tripartite system, provides elements of citizen representation and participation in decision-making. National commissions of the United

Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and national committees of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) have built strong bridges with professional groups, NGOs and even individual citizens. The same applies to the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) Freedom from Hunger Campaign. Not so in the UN, where it has been observed that 'until quite recently the hauteur of secretariat and diplomatic officials about NGOs was matched by the disinterest and disdain of large portions of the NGO community for the UN as merely "another bureaucracy"'.⁶

In any event, the current debate in ECOSOC will not proceed much further in the direction of a world parliament or a world consultative forum for civil society (although it must be noted that such avenues will continue to be pursued more aggressively on the UN's periphery⁷). It is even doubtful that ECOSOC will reach a consensus on the representation of civil society interests in the political *sancta sanctorum* of the General Assembly and the Security Council. However, this is already happening, or at least much more is happening than meets the eye of the custodians of the consultative process. Since the sessions of the General Assembly's main committees are public, current practice allows NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC to attend, albeit without the right to circulate documents or make statements. But much goes on informally, to the point that many NGOs that have representatives in New York are now more active in the General Assembly than in the Economic and Social Council.⁸ In addition, several subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly have devised informal arrangements allowing NGOs to take the floor or circulate documentation. Similarly, NGOs have participated actively in hearings of special committees (for example on apartheid) or in special sessions of the General Assembly (for example on disarmament or development). NGOs were invited, along with academics and entrepreneurs, to the hearings on the secretary-general's *An Agenda for Development*, convened by the president of the General Assembly in June 1994. Several NGO personalities have also been recently appointed by the secretary-general to serve on high-level advisory bodies (for example on sustainable development and on social and gender issues).

Interactions between NGOs and the Security Council are more low-key and indirect, but are nonetheless significant. The end of the Cold War and the de-compartmentalisation of hitherto separate regimes of UN activity—in particular of security and humanitarian issues—has greatly increased the humanitarian traffic that reaches this body, which in many ways has become a 'Humanitarian Security Council'.⁹ Humanitarian and human rights NGOs have been following these deliberations with increasing attention. Although there has been no attempt yet to obtain formal representation with the council, much of the significant activity actually goes on outside the council's chambers, in the corridors of the UN in New York and in the capitals of key member states. Governments cannot ignore the nuisance potential of NGOs back home, with their capacity to alert the media and public opinion. For example, the shape of the belated international response to the Rwanda crisis was determined by the pressures of the humanitarian lobby, including Africa Watch in Washington, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in Paris and Brussels, Oxfam and African Rights in London. Nongovernmental organisations are also an invaluable source of information on complex

emergencies because of their direct contacts on the ground, where there is much informal exchange in and around embassies. NGOs are in frequent contact with ministries and the media in donor capitals. Some of this undoubtedly trickles up to the Security Council and influences its debates.

The importance of the NGO perspective in political forums is demonstrated by its increasing relevance in official delegations or in humanitarian cells in capitals. A couple of examples should illustrate this point. A former senior manager of MSF heads the 'humanitarian crisis reflection cell' of the French Ministry of Defence; a former Oxfam executive is the key official dealing with humanitarian issues in the UK's permanent mission to the UN; and NGO representatives are routinely included in official delegations to General Assembly sessions and special conferences. Revolving-door assignments also are widespread between NGO and UN positions, particularly in operational programmes such as those of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP), where there is a tradition of picking talent from NGOs. No Amnesty International activist has yet been appointed to a senior position in the UN Centre for Human Rights, but this is the exception rather than the rule—and, to be fair, a former Amnesty International official was appointed to a very high position in the joint Organization of American States (OAS)–UN human rights monitoring mission to Haiti. In many ways these links between nongovernmental and governmental spheres of activity are a novel and welcome feature of the UN scene. This would have been unimaginable only five years ago.

Perhaps the most significant example of institutional interaction between an NGO—albeit a very special one—and the highest political level of the world organisation is the regular consultation between the president of the Security Council and the New York delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The ICRC was granted observer status by the General Assembly in 1990.¹⁰ Since then it has been patiently developing its net of political contacts within the United Nations. This has culminated in discreet monthly meetings with the serving president of the Security Council, a practice that has been taking place for nearly two years. Basically, this *tête à tête* allows both sides to raise issues of special concern and to ask for, or volunteer, information on specific country situations in an informal and confidential atmosphere. Although neither side is likely to comment on what has been on the agenda, both sides give considerable importance to the meetings, which now occur with Swiss precision.

Secretariat units at all levels have also developed routine contacts and exchanges of information with NGOs, whether in consultative status or not. Working relationships in the field are discussed later. At headquarters, an interesting trend seems to be emerging whereby NGOs are brought closer and closer to internal decision-making. An example is the participation of the main coalitions of humanitarian NGOs—InterAction and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA)—alongside the ICRC and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in the meetings of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which are chaired by the UN under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs. Interviews with secretariat and NGO participants confirm that this is not simply a token participation by representa-

tives of non-UN organisations. Policy and operational issues are discussed seriously and sometimes argued. Given the importance of humanitarian NGOs in the mobilisation of the international response to complex emergencies, having them on board when priorities and problems are thrashed out is no small advantage for all concerned. It also helps to introduce better transparency and accountability and to ease misunderstandings with other parts of the international response, such as the military. The Department for Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) also hosts regular meetings every four to six weeks with the main operational NGOs in the humanitarian arena, like CARE, the International Rescue Committee (IRC), Save the Children Federation (SCF), World Vision, MSF, Oxfam, etc. Similar meetings of European NGOs are hosted by UNHCR and DHA in Geneva on a regular basis.

The importance of NGOs as shapers of policy and not merely as providers of information or services is recognised by the secretary-general himself in his public presentations, but also, and more practically, in his schedule of appointments. A comparison of the present incumbent's schedule with that of his predecessor would no doubt show how much the heads of prominent NGOs and other non-state actors have become frequent visitors to the 38th floor of UN headquarters. The secretary-general must see the heads of ICRC or Oxfam or the IRC if they request appointments in the same way that he must see the presidents of the International Chamber of Commerce, of the Society for International Development, or of the Socialist International or Liberal International. This is also a reflection of how much NGOs have become active in areas that were previously considered the near-exclusive preserve of states: peacemaking and its junior cousins, preventative and humanitarian diplomacy.

A useful illustration of this relationship would be the role of an Italian NGO, the Comunità di Sant'Egidio, in ushering in the peace process in Mozambique. Thanks to its contacts with the Mozambican Catholic church and the Italian government, Sant'Egidio was instrumental in arranging for low-key talks between the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) government and its Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO) guerrilla opponents. The talks were held in Rome at the Sant'Egidio headquarters in a non-threatening atmosphere, starting in July 1990. Although the Italian authorities, the USA, the countries of the region, and the UN were kept informed, Sant'Egidio was in the driver's seat as mediator at least until sufficient confidence had been built up between the two sides for them to agree to bring in the international community.¹¹ Because Sant'Egidio was not a state, it provided a venue that avoided the issue of the parties' legal status. This was particularly important because RENAMO, being basically a rural insurgent movement, was unfamiliar with legal and diplomatic usages. Sant'Egidio was instrumental in allowing RENAMO to express 'its ideas in terms consistent with the overall goal of reconciliation'.¹²

Sant'Egidio has been active but less successful so far in other theatres. Its current initiatives on the Algerian crisis are now in the public domain. After two meetings convened in Rome, some progress seems to have been made at least in devising an acceptable framework for talks, despite the initial disbelief of the Algerian government and some of its main sponsors. Sant'Egidio is by no means the only example of behind-the-scenes peacemaking efforts conducted by re-

ligious NGOs in particular. In the early 1970s the All African Council of Churches was the primary mover in the first attempts to bring an end to the civil war in southern Sudan. More recently, the Mennonite Central Committee was involved in creative bridge-building in Somalia and was instrumental in bringing all the clans together for a meeting in Madagascar; Norwegian Church Aid has been doing similar work in Guatemala. The lesson here is that NGOs are often in a better position to reach out to non-state traditional or *de facto* (that is, warlords) authorities, than states or intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) are. As one observer put it, 'peace-making and peace-building are too important to be left to governments and the UN alone'.¹³

Another indicator of the growing involvement by nongovernmental organisations in peace initiatives can be seen in the current mushrooming of preventive diplomacy NGOs, such as the recently launched US-based International Crisis Group (ICG) or the initiative of a group of Euro-parliamentarians who have set up their own NGO, the European Forum for Preventive Diplomacy, which intends to act as a stimulant on preventative issues and to conduct missions to prevent tensions from escalating into conflict.¹⁴

Towards oligopoly?

Before looking at the new interactions between the UN and NGOs in the field, a discussion of financial flows and their implications is in order. During the past 20 years there has been an exponential growth of financial transfers by and through NGOs from the industrialised to the developing world. The total flow is estimated by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) at \$8.3 billion in 1992, or a staggering 13% of all development assistance.¹⁵ This is much more than the amount being transferred through the UN system (not including the Bretton Woods institutions). In terms of net transfers, NGOs collectively represent the second-largest source of development and relief assistance, second only to bilateral governmental donors. This is largely the result of the increasing volume of official funding that is being channelled through NGOs to developing countries. Public grants represented 1.5% of NGO income in 1970, 35% in 1988, and, with the explosion of humanitarian relief programmes in recent years, probably over 40% today. Co-financing arrangements and direct transfers of bilateral or multilateral funds for operations in the Third World have therefore radically changed the funding picture of the NGO community. From the donor perspective the change has been equally noteworthy: member countries of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) now transfer about 9% of their official overseas development assistance (ODA) through nongovernmental organisations, with much higher percentages in some countries. The figure for Switzerland is 19%. In 1993 the USA was channelling 17% of its ODA through private groups; this has increased to an estimated 30% in 1995 and is likely to increase immediately to 40% under the 'New Partnership Initiative' announced by the USA at the World Summit for Social Development.¹⁶

These figures signal a major quantitative and qualitative change in the way NGOs function in the Third World; the causes and implications of this change

deserve to be more fully analysed. Regrettably, data on the destination of funds channelled through NGOs—types of activities and beneficiaries, breakdown between development and relief—are notoriously sketchy and unreliable. As for the origins of such funds—that is, the precise mix of voluntary contributions from the general public, direct overseas development assistance funding, and indirect funding through multilateral institutions—the situation is at best one of ‘creative accounting’. The notion of co-financing is undergoing radical change. Ten years ago the European Community (EC, now EU) and most governments insisted on a 50–50 rule; but the portion of NGO resources that is now going into the co-financing equation is shrinking rapidly. The EU and the USA are now down to a 90–10 co-financing arrangement, especially in the case of emergency relief assistance. In some cases the remaining 10% is financed by another public source, for example by a UN agency.

Although the expansion of the role of NGOs in North–South relations may simply be part of the larger, worldwide growth of the non-profit sector, it does seem that an important restructuring in the functioning of significant sectors of society, particularly weaker Third World societies, is taking place. NGOs are now increasingly assuming state-type functions, such as the provision of public services, in areas like health and education to an extent that was unimaginable only a decade ago.

One explanation of this shift is that it represents a lasting legacy of Reaganism–Thatcherism in the sense that it is an application of laissez-faire and anti-state ideology to international relations. A similar view holds that it is a manifestation of the North’s loss of patience with the perceived ineffectiveness of UN organisations as conduits for international assistance and of the corresponding faith in the operational superiority of ‘hands-on’ NGOs. In any event, the end of the Cold War seems to have accelerated a process that was already underway—the emergence of political conditionality. The Northern NGO community has benefited collectively from the fact that, with the end of superpower confrontation, the need for political state-to-state North–South support has all but disappeared.¹⁷ This has made it easier for Northern donors to say ‘human rights (and privatisation) first, development later’, a complete reversal of the conventional wisdom that ruled in the halcyon days of ‘development (and state support) first, human rights later’.

Furthermore, the dramatic appearance in the international panorama of failed states, and their corollaries, failed and arrested development, has also spurred the growth of NGOs. In such situations, the normal interlocutors of aid bureaucracies—the ministers and functionaries of the recipient government—disappear. The recourse to NGOs for assistance imposes itself when there is no government or when there are competing claims on the state. In internal conflicts, signing projects or aid agreements with government officials becomes impractical or politically contentious. Bilateral donors and UN agencies are conceptually and institutionally grounded when governmental implementing partners exist the development or relief scene. UN operational agencies—UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP—are slowly building up competencies in complex emergencies and procedures for working in failed states and civil war situations, but it takes time to build this expertise. It is only natural, therefore, that the United Nations should seek the

talent and flexibility of operational NGOs, especially those with a documented history of working in war zones.

Finally, while the number of claimants for stagnating resources increases, short-term emergency needs take precedence over longer-term development. For example, the World Food Programme used to be primarily a development and food-for-work organisation. Now, close to 80% of its food resources are being devoted to emergency feeding programmes. This increases the demand for operational capacity in the field. UN agencies are stretched to the limit and, for budgetary and cultural reasons, are unable to redistribute staff resources quickly among programmes or to scale up existing staffing. NGOs have the flexibility to redeploy and grow faster. From Bosnia to Somalia to Rwanda a growing number of NGOs has been launched on the wave of breaking emergencies. While some are run by and employ hardened professionals, others are more of the Indiana Jones variety, making up solutions as they go along.

It remains to be seen whether the current spate of complex emergencies will be a permanent operational reality for the international community or if it is only a transitory phase in the post-Cold War movement of tectonic plates. It also remains to be seen whether the donor community will be able to continue mobilising the political will and the resources for stop-gap emergency assistance and for longer-term development in the Third World. Although serious prevention initiatives are nowhere to be seen, donor exhaustion looms ominously. Without public and media pressure for humanitarian aid, the rhetoric of political conditionality may be used as an excuse for doing less.¹⁸ The international NGO community is not indifferent in this debate. On one hand, it has greatly benefited from the increasing donor tendency to direct overseas development assistance away from Third World governments; on the other, this trend has fundamentally modified the nature of many operational NGOs. Free spirits who were at one time relatively independent in terms of policy choices and access to funding are finding that they have become implementers of donor or UN policies and contracts. A new generation of NGO, the 'public service contractor', has appeared, particularly on the relief scene, and it relies exclusively on public funding for its existence.¹⁹ Hence the legitimate question: is an organization that receives 100% of its funding from public sources still an NGO?

The new rules of the game in the solidarity and charity business, or in the 'humanitarian international', as it has been called,²⁰ have serious implications for NGOs. Their members are torn between the double dilemmas of independence and subservience, and between a keep-it-simple grassroots culture and the imperatives of running a business. No figures are available on the numbers of Northern expatriates and support staff employed by NGOs at home and abroad. Certainly their numbers are sizeable and their lobby is powerful (and to some extent humanitarian assistance functions as an unemployment subsidy for young people in the North). Two questions are worth asking: to what extent does the readiness of Northern NGOs to intervene in Southern theatres detract from local coping mechanisms (that is, might it be possible to use the same monies to generate many more jobs in the South)? Can Northern NGOs survive the quantum leap in interventionist capability without losing their soul, or at least without fundamental changes in their ethics and culture?

Some disturbing trends are starting to appear. While advocacy NGOs do not seem to run the risk of being expelled from the ever-expanding marketplace of ideas—civil society seems capable of absorbing unlimited competition of ideas and movements on all fronts—the market for operational NGOs is a very real one; the competition for finite and potentially contracting resources is increasingly tough. The explosion of humanitarian needs in the last five years seems to have resulted in a contradictory process of polarisation and concentration in the NGO community. At one end, many new and often 'truck-by-night' operations have made their entrance. At the other end, the more established actors appear to be engaged in a process of 'ganging up', primarily as a way of jockeying for position and resources and as a way of consolidating power and influence. One experienced observer has concluded that this is tantamount to an oligopoly, where eight major families or federations of international NGOs have come to control almost half an \$8 billion market.²¹ These eight market leaders control shares that are not far from \$500 million a year each. They are: CARE (which has four main chapters in the USA, Canada, the UK and Australia and smaller ones in Germany, France, Italy, Denmark and Japan); World Vision International (a rapidly growing player with branches in the USA, Australia, Canada, the UK, New Zealand, Germany and elsewhere); the Oxfam federation (comprising nine chapters in the UK and Ireland, the USA, Canada, Quebec, Australia, New Zealand, Belgium, Hong Kong, and recently joined by Novib, a major Dutch NGO); the MSF group (chapters in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, the USA and MSF-International); the Save the Children Federation (chapters in the USA, UK and the Scandinavian countries); and the more traditional coalitions or consortia of operational NGOs, ie, CIDSE (Coopération internationale pour le développement et la solidarité, the coalition of Catholic development NGOs), APDOVE (Association of Protestant Development Organizations in Europe), and Eurostep (the main coalition of European secular NGOs).²²

In most cases these groupings do not affect the individuality of their constituent members, who retain their operational and financial independence, except for World Vision, which is managed centrally. They do, however, engage in some coordination and organised division of labour within groupings, which greatly facilitates fundraising and helps in particular with access to European Union and UN funds. CARE, for example, has a lead agency approach whereby one of its branches is the principal partner in specific countries. The groupings are thus in a position to better coordinate policies on specific situations and to shape the market by their sheer presence in particular sectors or geographical areas.

The UN and the EU have facilitated, if not encouraged, this process of aggregation. It is easier to do business with semi-structured large consortia than with atomised individual NGOs. Indeed, both the EU and the UN have actively promoted the creation of networks and coalitions of issue-specific NGOs—in the development and humanitarian arenas in particular—at the international level. These include Eurostep for development NGOs in Brussels; International Council for Voluntary Agencies for refugee and humanitarian NGOs dealing with UNHCR in Geneva; and coalitions of humanitarian NGOs in the USA (InterAction) and in Europe (Actionaid) that act as a link to the UN Department of Humanitarian

Affairs and other UN bodies. UN organisations and some host governments have also fostered NGO coordination mechanisms and consortia in the field.

It is paradoxical that a process that owes so much to free-market ideology has resulted in an oligopoly, within which the smaller actors, not to mention indigenous ones in Third World countries, are at a distinct disadvantage. Perhaps deregulation has gone too far and some anti-trust control might be in order. It is also interesting to note that this process of concentration is paralleled by one of homogenisation in the practices, management style, and activities of NGOs.²³ To a large extent this results from donor pressure to conform to established norms and standards. NGOs have to fit into the mould that the system requires. It has been aptly noted that 'it is ironic that free trade theory, which emphasizes choice and freedom, brooks no opposition to itself'.²⁴

The UN and NGOs in the field

Intervention by international non-state actors in the Third World is by no means a new phenomenon. Missionary activity has always accompanied colonisation. Although the ideological underpinnings may seem outdated—proselytising and the 'white man's burden' rather than sustainable human development—the activities carried out by the new 'missionaries' may not be altogether that different from those of colonial times. Often it has been the same individuals; in the 1960s and 1970s, especially in Africa, large numbers of former missionaries, colonial administrators and even military personnel transferred to NGOs, where they continued to do field work. This generation is now gone, though some old-timers still survive, but it can be argued that it was instrumental in shaping the ethos and culture of NGO work in developing countries and also in establishing the institutional framework for local groups to operate in. This is not meant to imply that all NGO expatriates are missionaries or pawns in the neocolonialist enterprise. It would be absurd to lump together NGOs that espouse Western values and those that deliberately challenge such values or actively promote social change, local and national self-reliance, or grassroots development. NGOs are, however, an inescapably Western concept, even though the system tends to export its antibodies as well as its values.

Nongovernmental organisations, often strong and healthy, obviously exist outside the first world—the figure of 5 000 NGOs in India is oft quoted. These can be either endogenous—with values, aspirations and operating modalities fundamentally alien to Western traditions—or entities with more familiar values and activities. The point is that the culture and standard operating procedures of the NGOs that are of interest here—that is, recognisable operational or advocacy organisations with a combination of voluntary support and external funding that implement discrete activities—are basically Western in origin.

The traditional operational relationships between the UN and NGOs in the field have undergone vast qualitative and quantitative changes in the last two decades. In the heyday of 'Third-Worldism', the development decades, and the quest for a New International Economic Order (NIEO), the UN and the donor community at large—with no significant differences between East and West—were promoting the mobilising myth of state planning. The official discourse was statist and

did not really factor in non-state actors as independent variables in civil society. NGOs did not fit prominently into the picture and were treated at best with benign neglect. As far as the United Nations is concerned, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the main interlocutor with governments on development issues, did not have a framework for dealing with NGOs at the field level until the late 1980s. International NGOs were often involved in social work and community development well before community development became a buzzword in UN circles. However, as the figures quoted in the preceding section indicate, the role of NGOs in shaping the development debate and as operational partners for the UN in the field was relatively marginal at least until the late 1970s. NGOs were active in certain sectors, particularly in relief work, and in many countries.²⁵ But there was little functional interaction between the UN system as such and international NGOs in the field. The only significant exception to this was UNHCR, which had traditionally devolved management and delivery of assistance to refugee camps to an array of specialised implementing partners (CARE, IRC, the many Caritas chapters, etc).

Moreover, the strictures of the Cold War did not allow for action by UN agencies or UN-sponsored programmes in civil wars. Cross-border humanitarian assistance was basically taboo for the UN since it was tantamount to a violation of sovereignty. Eritrea and Tigray are well documented cases of relatively large crossborder humanitarian assistance programmes implemented by consortia of nongovernmental organisations, with the humanitarian wings of the concerned liberation fronts but without any direct UN involvement.²⁶

Meanwhile, UN assistance was being organised from the government side, and it reached mainly, if not exclusively, government-held territory. Similarly, crossborder assistance from Pakistan to mujahidin areas of Afghanistan became a growth industry for NGOs after the Soviet invasion. The role of UN agencies—UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF—was to provide assistance to refugees in Pakistan. The UN was not mandated, and was disinclined, to send anything to vulnerable groups across the border. The recognised government was in Kabul, and UN development activities there were largely unaffected by the war, except for the fact that they were limited to shrinking government-controlled areas. The situation changed only after the taboo was lifted by the Geneva Accords of April 1988. The government reluctantly agreed that the UN would work crossborder from Pakistan, Iran and the Soviet Union on the basis of a 'humanitarian consensus' of all warring parties. When, after the departure of the last Soviet troops, the UN stepped up its crossborder programmes using international NGOs as implementing partners, this was not without friction with mujahidin leaders and some NGOs that felt the UN was tainted because of its association with the Kabul government.

Coordination mechanisms among NGOs or between the NGO community and the UN have become more structured in recent years because of the mushrooming of complex emergencies and the parallel growth in the number of actors involved in them. Coordination mechanisms for development activities normally involve a prominent role for the host government, which is in a position to establish rules governing NGO presence and operations. In complex emergencies and in situations of internal conflict, there is often no meaningful government. A variety of coordination arrangements have been tested over the years. In some

situations the chemistry and composition of the NGO community allow it to take the lead in coordinating its own activities and in providing a framework for interacting with the UN; in others, especially when there is a strong UN presence, the UN can provide a forum for UN-NGO coordination.

For instance, in the case of the cross-border programmes relating to Afghanistan, the 100 or so international and Afghan NGOs operating out of Pakistan developed a structured coordination framework with two regional bodies: Agency Coordination Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR) for programmes originating from the North-West Frontier Province, and South-Western Afghanistan and Baluchistan Agency Coordination (SWABAC) for NGOs operating out of Baluchistan. ACBAR in particular was much more than a forum for exchange of information; it had a paid secretariat, geographical and sectoral committees (health, agriculture, education) that helped ensure a better division of labour, and some coherence in procedures and standards (for example, local salaries). Many NGOs 'did their own thing', however, and the Islamic NGOs tended to ignore ACBAR altogether. However, the UN found a reality that it could not ignore; it did not attempt to take over responsibility for coordination in an aggressive manner. In specific sectors it even allowed itself to be initially 'coordinated' by the key NGOs. For example, in the agricultural sector, one NGO, the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, had far more competence and staff—including former senior government technicians and managers—than the UN agencies, which were considered the new kids on the block. Although much of the funding came from EC and UN sources, the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan successfully mounted and coordinated a multimillion-dollar pest control programme in eight or nine Afghan provinces, a task that the UN was initially unable to do or even to monitor.

The opposite happened in Rwanda. Over 100 NGOs were present in Kigali at the height of the emergency, but they were unable to agree on a coordination structure, despite an offer by ICVA to establish it. This was perhaps a recognition of the effectiveness of the leadership role in coordination exercised by the UN's Rwanda Emergency Office (UNREO), to which the NGOs flocked naturally. Paradoxically, it was the NGO community itself that provided assistance to UNREO, by seconding an NGO person to act as liaison officer with the community.

A number of new and significant operational interactions between the UN and NGOs in the field deserve to be highlighted. The fact that UNHCR, and to a lesser extent UNICEF and WFP, engage NGOs as privileged implementing partners in relief situations has been mentioned. Rather than relying exclusively on international NGOs for this purpose, UNHCR tries when possible to use trained local staff. When local NGOs are unavailable or when it is expedient to do so, UNHCR creates 'dedicated' NGOs to implement its programmes. These organisations receive all their funding from UNHCR and for all practical purposes are totally under its control, if not directly integrated into its local management structure. The financial and managerial advantages of the approach are obvious. The disadvantages are that the staff of these organisations are not UN staff and therefore have lesser protection in the face of high security risks. Often such dedicated NGOs employ expatriates as managers or in key positions. This allows UNHCR and the other UN agencies that have adopted this approach to circumvent the rigidities

of creating new budgetary posts, normally a complicated and time-consuming procedure. While flexibility is an obvious asset, it does create a sort of subcategory of UN staff, locally recruited and less protected.

Perhaps the most interesting and large-scale example of the creation of dedicated NGOs by the UN is the de-mining programme in Afghanistan. Given the impossibility of setting up a national or government structure to address the mine problem in a fragmented if not war-torn country, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan (UNOCA) set up facilities to train Afghan de-miners in Pakistan. This was done with the help of military experts provided by several donor countries and with the logistical support of the Pakistani army. Several thousand de-miners, mostly ex-mujahidin combatants, were thus trained. Rather than employing these de-miners itself, which as a coordination body it was not mandated to do, UNOCA drew up the terms of reference and created several Afghan NGOs to implement the programme. These organisations were fully funded by the United Nations and staffed by Afghans with a small number of expatriate consultants, mainly for planning, monitoring and quality control purposes. Overall coordination was provided by UNOCA's de-mining programme officers. Thus a Mine Clearance Planning Agency—which decided on the areas and the priority tasks to be performed and provided essential quality control—was created. Several regionally-based mine clearance agencies were created, each responsible for deploying mine clearance teams on the ground under the supervision of the planning agency. In 1991, while civil war was still raging in parts of the country, the United Nations was employing more than 1 000 Afghan de-miners through its dedicated NGOs. In mid-1995 this figure had risen to over 3 000.

A similar approach was followed for mine awareness campaigns. International NGOs were initially contracted to develop a strategy, publicity materials and training modules. The programme was subsequently 'Afghanised', with several regionally-based organisations providing training and deploying mine-awareness teams throughout the country (in government-held areas this was done through the Afghan Red Crescent Society, but using a common method). Without a viable and acceptable government structure, the overall coordination of the programme was provided by the UN, on the understanding that this would be transferred to the government when conditions permitted. This complex, ongoing, multimillion-dollar programme represented a unique effort to address a dramatically real problem and to encourage as much national self-reliance as local conditions permit. By and large it is considered a success story, the component of the UN Afghan programme that donors have consistently and generously funded.

A variant of the above is UN encouragement for the creation of indigenous NGOs that are not necessarily fully 'dedicated' and exclusively funded by UN sources, but that are semi-autonomous hybrids. Many such organisations have been deliberately established to act as implementing partners in humanitarian programmes. Others have been encouraged to come into existence to compete for UN resources, or they tend to germinate spontaneously. For instance, UNOCA in Pakistan and Afghanistan had a deliberate policy of 'Afghanization', which resulted in the rather liberal distribution of resources (cash, vehicles, office

equipment) to nascent groups that were to act as implementing partners. This was done partly to encourage local self-reliance and a shift towards civilian reconstruction rather than military pursuits. It was done partly to undercut the hold that external NGOs had on certain areas, where they were sometimes simply providing a conduit for a rather peculiar type of 'humanitarian' aid to warring factions (for example, medical assistance to mujahidin groups). The idea was that the provision of such seed resources was the paying ticket to enter areas where humanitarian needs were not being met. This policy often ran into trouble because some of these nascent groups were not bona fide NGOs, but fronts for military/political entities. Institutional support to one group in one valley was naturally perceived as divisive and contentious by groups in neighbouring valleys. This approach is by no means unique to Afghanistan. In Somalia, the UN spawned colonies of clients. It has been noted that in Mogadishu in 1994 there were an estimated 1 000 'local NGOs set up by Somalis to channel foreign funds into worthy projects ... By the end of its mission, the UN was easily the biggest employer in Somalia ... supporting, according to some estimates, a hundred thousand people in Mogadishu.'²⁷

Finally, a visible post-Cold War novelty in the field interactions between the UN and NGOs needs to be briefly mentioned—the increasing contact, friction, tension and synergies between NGOs and the UN military. From Angola to Bosnia, from Mozambique to Rwanda, the NGO community has been working in an environment where the presence of UN troops is the rule rather than the exception. New concepts and approaches are being tested and much fumbling has occurred in the encounter of hitherto antagonistic cultures. While there has been some initial enthusiasm for the role of the military in providing protection to NGO activities and security to staff, experience in Somalia and elsewhere has had a dampening effect. Most humanitarian actors would probably agree that direct military intervention in humanitarian programmes, whether UN or NGO, should be a last resort. This is not to deny the useful support role that the military can provide, particularly in the breaking phase of a complex emergency.

In Rwanda, and in the spillover areas of the Rwandan crisis, particularly in Goma, the military have been in many ways an important feature in the day-to-day life of the humanitarian community. The UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) and, for the period that they were there, the French, US, and other contingents were providing essential services to UN agencies, NGOs and even the media. These included security, logistics (transport of humanitarian commodities, free access to fuel, communications, medical support, air services, etc), information-sharing, and even the direct delivery of assistance. While these services were generally appreciated, there were mixed feelings in the humanitarian community, and in particular among NGOs, about the profile to be adopted, and the degree of proximity to be maintained in dealing with the UN military. Humanitarian NGOs were uneasy about being placed under a military umbrella, except when overwhelming security considerations dictated otherwise. It can also be argued that 'it is to the military's advantage to keep its profile and image distinct from those of the humanitarian agencies'.²⁸

For reasons that are self-evident, the military is not best-suited to interact with civil society. In common with all military establishments, the UN military tends

to cut itself off from society by setting up heavily fortified military compounds wherever it goes. Razor wire is enough to intimidate NGOs, not to mention the local population, even if the blue flag provides a reassuring presence. Less-intrusive forms of interaction with the military have been tried successfully in the context of the Rwanda crisis. This involved placing military assets under the direct control of the humanitarian agency. In one case, British troops in uniform from the corps of engineers were assigned to UNHCR to work at water and sanitation projects in refugee camps. In another, Irish military engineers clad in NGO T-shirts performed similar functions under the command and control of the Irish NGO, Goal. Such unobtrusive forms of collaboration between the military and NGOs are likely to be more effective and palatable to the humanitarian community than muscle-flexing.

The free spirits in a bind?

The preceding pages have attempted to outline some of the more significant innovations in the complex set of relationships between the NGO and UN communities. This general survey is somewhat biased by the writer's personal experience in the matter and is not exhaustive. There would be much to say from a UN perspective, for instance, on human rights NGOs, on development advocacy NGOs or on grassroots NGOs in the Third World. One must also be conscious of the dangers of sweeping statements and generalisations. The NGO community is not rational and uniform, but is an extremely diverse and sometimes fractious universe crisscrossed by contradictory forces. High levels of professionalism and contract-hungry or media-hungry amateurism coexist side by side, sometimes within the same organisation. Efforts by the NGO community to regulate its own behaviour—for example, through the elaboration of codes of conduct for relief organisations—often clash with the policy and practice of individual NGOs that are quick to jump on the relief bandwagon. In Goma, most NGOs seemed to have an inexhaustible supply of T-shirts with their coloured logo on display; some were more keen on jockeying for TV-friendly locations than on professionalism; and many appeared vulnerable to media and public opinion shifts at home. On the basis of research in various conflicts and emergencies, one observer concluded that 'we have yet to give the NGO community high marks for performance in even routine operational tasks' and that in the Gulf crisis 'the prevailing picture of NGOs was one of energy and determination, mixed with confusion and disarray. Distinguishing the charlatan from the humanitarian proved difficult in the panic of the crisis.'²⁹

It has often been pointed out that the archetypal NGO is fundamentally a Western concept. It cannot be superimposed on indigenous self-help coping mechanisms, or on community-based structures for the protection of families or groups, or on the mechanisms to effect social change that may exist in rural or traditional societies. The notions of 'state' and 'civil society' are also basically Hegelian, Westphalian and Western.³⁰ While these terms have a relatively uniform meaning in the North, or at least in the West, they cover a wide range of different realities in the Third World. The relations between the individual, the community, civil society, the state and their representations in the collective

unconscious are likely to be quite different in Bamiyan, Bandung, Bukavu and Boston.

Even with the best of intentions—solidarity, promotion of human rights, justice, grassroots sustainable development, life-saving emergency relief—helping hands extended by outside NGOs, UN agencies or bilaterals are fraught with risks for recipients. Deliberately or not, when they result in the imposition of Western values and approaches, the dangers are even greater. From this point of view, development assistance, whether through bilateral, UN or NGO channels, has often acted as a North–South conveyor belt for Western rationality. The key vehicle in this process is the ideology of the project as the privileged, discrete, time-limited, and budget-driven instrument to shape change. This approach, and the mimicry it encourages, may be fundamentally alien to the way that social change is perceived in non-Western cultures.³¹ Or, as one observer put it, 'The development enterprise is oriented "North–South" by patterns of dominance between "uppers" and "lowers", and by funding, pressures to disburse and top-down accountability. These patterns increasingly affect NGOs, which may then become more like government organizations, in scale, staffing, hierarchical culture, procedures, and self-deception.'³²

If development assistance breeds dependency, what should be said about relief? While humanitarian activities in Rwanda, Mozambique, Afghanistan or Somalia unquestionably provided succour and saved lives, the longer-term impact of the delivery of an overwhelming proportion of humanitarian assistance through external conduits—first and foremost NGOs—needs to be better understood. Hundreds of NGOs literally descended on Kigali and Goma at the onset of the crisis. More than 200 are currently active in humanitarian and development assistance in Mozambique. As crises come and go on the international community's selective radar screen, so does the humanitarian international. Apart from the chronic lack of consistency in the response, must not one ask what the consequences of this donor-driven invasion by humanitarians are likely to be for weakened or fledgling indigenous structures? In parts of the Third World, especially Africa, centralised authority has imploded. The weaker the government structures, the more difficult it is to resist the invasion.

In Mozambique, and to a lesser extent in other countries, the government has been obliged to surrender elements of sovereignty temporarily as a condition for the peace process to come to fruition. The donors and the relief community have been quick to fill the vacuum with operational plenum. Policies, privatisation and the like, are set by the donor consortium; implementation is in the hands of NGOs. Government entities have been weakened because they have been perceived as corrupt. They are being replaced by private companies, including many from industrialised countries. Relief agencies—and NGOs in particular, some of which have programmes larger than those of the largest bilateral donor³³—have become the chief providers of public welfare and important sources of employment. They also further weaken government structures by siphoning off the remaining trained and competent local professionals, from deputy ministers to drivers, who are attracted by the higher and regular salaries paid by the outsiders.³⁴ The cost to the government of keeping track of thousands of projects represents an additional burden, if not a direct diversion of resources. A senior

government official lamented that 'rivers of money were being spent on expatriate rather than on Mozambican talent'. Even some NGO representatives recognise that 'the government has lost all control', that the outsiders are 'arrogant', and that some are 'running amok in the most extraordinary way'.³⁵

Western disengagement, the promotion of civil society and privatisation ideologies, and the quantum jump in NGO operations in the Third World are different elements in the same process. In many Third World countries, nongovernmental organisations are filling important short-term gaps because of the state's inability to provide essential services, particularly in the fields of health, education and welfare. Helping to fund the recovery of states as such, whether from conflict or from failed development, is not high on the international community's priority list.

The UN seems to have abandoned its traditional role of advocate of national self-reliance, a role it had played strongly in the 1970s and 1980s. The quest for a more equitable international economic order, Third World militancy and its attendant rhetoric—in such forums as UNCTAD, the Commission on Transnational Corporations, and the General Assembly—have all but disappeared. The mantra of national planning has been replaced by *laissez-faire*. It can even be argued that the liturgical invocation of the concept of 'sustainable human development', and of the role of civil society therein, further encourages people to bypass the shrinking powers of host governments. Even UNDP, once the steadfast proponent of statism and of the role of planning in development, is now turning to civil society organisations, like NGOs and the private sector, for project execution. Most Third World governments, whether they subscribe to the theory or not, are not in a position to resist. Nongovernmental organisations are part of this worldwide shift in the manner in which societies function. The growth of NGO funding and activities is unquestionable. Little is known, however, of the impact of this growth. From a UN perspective, one must ask, does it work? Can we document that privatisation, and the role of NGOs therein, promotes healthier and more democratic societies than previous models did?

Development as an aspiration for more *égalité* and *fraternité* not only within but between nations may soon be an idea whose time has gone.³⁶ The dialectics of globalisation and fragmentation is rapidly changing the shape of North–South relations and the terms of the debate. Development no longer seems to be the mobilising paradigm, but a replacement has yet to appear. It is no longer fashionable to shake the banner of social change, even as the urgency of relief makes operational choices simpler. Many NGOs with militant roots are being sucked into the business and are becoming service providers. Many others are simply born into the new world without the luxury of roots and values. The NGO community as a whole cannot afford to ignore the terms of this debate between values, consciousness-raising and advocacy on one side, and pressures to seek funds and to disburse them on the other.

Nongovernmental organisations, particularly those that act as implementing partners, find themselves at a difficult crossroads. It is to be hoped that the logic of self-criticism and accountability will prevail over subservience and the contract culture. Free spirits are sorely needed to protect and promote the interests of the victims of massive dislocations in the Third World. NGOs have

been the traditional allies of the United Nations in the quest for more justice and solidarity. Often they have been the critical conscience of the UN, shaming it and pushing it forward. Overall this has been a positive relationship. And this is how it should be, provided that each side can be held accountable for what it does.

Notes

The author, a United Nations staff member, wrote this article while on a sabbatical leave with the Humanitarianism and War project, Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University. He is solely responsible for the views expressed in this essay.

¹ For a discussion of the functioning of the consultative status mechanisms at the UN, see document E/AC.70/1994/5 of 26 May 1994, *General Review of Arrangements for Consultations with Non-Governmental Organizations*, Report of the Secretary-General, in particular paras 51 to 82 on the experience to date in the implementation of Resolution 1296.

² See UN document A/49/215-E/1994/99 of 5 July 1994, *Report of the open-ended working group on the review of arrangements for consultations with non-governmental organizations*, and E/AC.70/1995/CRP.1, which contains the draft revised text of the resolution.

³ Resolutions 47/91, 1993/215 and 1993/220, respectively.

⁴ Document E/AC.70/1995, para 33.

⁵ As Richard Jolly, deputy executive director of UNICEF put it, '... in issues of children's rights, NGOs can often do things or say things which UN bodies—as intergovernment bodies—no matter how forward thinking—find it difficult or impossible to do'. Statement to the ECOSOC open-ended working group to review arrangements for consultations with NGOs, 20 June, 1994.

⁶ Erskine Childers & Brian Urquhart, *Renewing the United Nations System*, Uppsala: Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 1994, p 172.

⁷ Structured proposals were put forth on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the UN by Marc Nerfin, 'The future of the United Nations system: some questions on the occasion of an anniversary', *Development Dialogue* 1, Uppsala: Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 1985. Similar proposals have resurfaced 10 years later. See Childers & Urquhart, *Renewing*, p 171; Maurice Bertrand, *Une nouvelle charte pour l'organisation mondiale?*, paper presented to a seminar at IRIH, Geneva, 27–28 February 1995; and Commission on Global Governance, *Our Global Neighbourhood*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

⁸ See document E/AC.70/1994/5, para 112, footnote.

⁹ Maurice Bertrand, 'Une organisation perimée', *Le monde des débats*, July–August 1994.

¹⁰ The Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Order of Malta have also graduated from consultative to observer status, but they have not yet and are not likely to develop a similar relationship with the Security Council. Other coalitions of humanitarian NGOs, InterAction in particular, have requested observer status to be able to address the General Assembly and to have more document circulation rights, but this has been rejected by the General Assembly. In fact it is unlikely that the observer gates will be reopened soon. During the debate at the 49th session of the General Assembly, many delegations expressed the feeling that increasing the presence of non-state actors would run the risk of changing the nature of the organisation.

¹¹ The role of the Comunità di Sant'Egidio in the Mozambican peace process is described in detail in Cameron Hume, *Ending Mozambique's War. The Role of Mediation and Good Offices*, Washington DC: US Institute for Peace, 1994.

¹² *Ibid* p 73.

¹³ Larry Minear, 'Humanitarian intervention in a New World Order: prospects for NGOs', in *NGOs and Refugees: Reflections at the turn of the Century*, Essays in honour of Arne Piel Christensen, Copenhagen: Danish Centre for Human Rights, 1993.

¹⁴ European Parliament, *Liaison Info*, 3, 1994.

¹⁵ The figures in this paragraph are drawn from UN document E/AC.70/1994/5, paras 16 and 28. Some authors place the NGO market share as high as \$10 billion in 1993; on this see Ian Smillie, 'Changing partners: Northern NGOs, Northern governments', in *Non-Governmental Organizations and Governments, Stakeholders for Development*, Paris: OECD, 1993, p 14.

¹⁶ Barbara Crossette, 'Gore says US will shift more foreign aid to private groups', *New York Times*, 13 March 1995.

¹⁷ Mark Duffield, 'NGOs, disaster relief and asset transfer in the horn: political survival in a permanent emergency', *Development and Change*, 24, 1993, p 149.

- ¹⁸ Ibid, p 151. See also Rakiya Omaar & Alex de Waal, *Humanitarianism Unbound, Current Dilemmas Facing Multi-Mandate Relief Operations in Political Emergencies*, Discussion Paper No 5, London: Africa Rights, 1994.
- ¹⁹ Duffield, 'NGOs', p 141.
- ²⁰ See Omaar & de Waal, *Humanitarianism Unbound*.
- ²¹ A senior UNDP official, interviewed on 28 February 1995.
- ²² I am indebted to Ian Smillie for having provided me with empirical evidence to support the oligopoly thesis. According to information that he has assembled from various published sources, the annual income of World Vision International in 1992/1993 was on the order of \$438 million (including \$85 million of food aid and other in-kind contributions). It is reported to have increased significantly since then. CARE had a combined income of over \$620 million in 1992, roughly half of which was for food and freight. Conservative estimates of the annual incomes of the scf and Oxfam groups are on the order of \$360 million and \$250 million respectively. No figures were readily available for the other groupings, but they all are believed to be well above the \$250 million mark.
- ²³ Smillie, 'Changing partners', p 23.
- ²⁴ Tim Lang & Colin Hines, *The New Protectionism*, London: Earthscan Publications, 1994, p 63.
- ²⁵ International NGOs started descending *en masse*, rather selectively, on several African countries in the late 1970s. In the early 1980s, when Sankara was in power, over 300 NGOs were active in Burkina Faso.
- ²⁶ Mark Duffield & John Prendergast, *Without Troops & Tanks: Humanitarian Intervention in Ethiopia and Eritrea*, Trenton, NJ: The Red Sea Press, 1994.
- ²⁷ William Finnegan, 'Letter from Mogadishu. A world of dust', *The New Yorker*, 20 March 1995.
- ²⁸ See Department of Humanitarian Affairs, *Report on the Coordination of Humanitarian Activities in Rwanda*, New York: United Nations, November 1994. A report on the use of military assets in Rwanda is being prepared under the auspices of the Humanitarianism and War Project of the Watson Institute. See Larry Minear & Philippe Guillot, *The Contribution of International Military Forces to Humanitarian Action in Rwanda*, Paris: OECD, 1996 forthcoming.
- ²⁹ See Larry Minear, 'Humanitarian intervention'.
- ³⁰ The argument here is that the Treaty of Westphalia and Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, by defining the realms of sovereignty on the one hand, and of the state and civil society on the other, basically ordered our representations of how the archetypal Northern state functions. Hegelian and post-Hegelian (for example, Gramscian) theory are still relevant to capture the role of NGOs in civil society. This latter term is loosely understood here, as in Gramsci, to encompass everything that can be found between the economy and the state's political institutions—political parties, trade unions, professional associations, the media, NGOs, and so on. It has also been argued by Smillie (in 'Changing partners', p 18) that the theoretical basis of the NGO phenomenon is Tocquevillian. Be that as it may, it remains Western.
- ³¹ For a detailed critique of 'project aid' see Bernard Lecomte, *L'aide par projet. Limites et alternatives*, Paris: OECD, p 1986.
- ³² See Robert Chambers, 'NGOs and development: the primacy of the personal', draft paper for a workshop on 'NGOs and development: performance and accountability', Institute of Development Policy and Management, University of Manchester, 27–29 June 1994.
- ³³ It is reported that in 1993 and 1994 World Vision became the single largest donor in Mozambique, with total budgets of \$90 million and \$80 million, respectively.
- ³⁴ For a critical analysis of the role of the 'new missionaries' in Mozambique, see Joseph Hanlon, *Mozambique: Who Calls the Shots?* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991.
- ³⁵ Interviews in Maputo, December 1994.
- ³⁶ It has been pointed out that "Development" as an ever-growing populist project for the legitimization of Third World Governments, supported by the industrial powers, may go the way of decolonization. Analysts a generation hence may look on it as just another historically significant, but temporary, world political issue, a way of establishing manageable political cleavages among those with more and those with less power ... The new cleavages that will replace "development" at the center of the same politics are not yet clear.' Craig N Murphy & Enrico Augelli, 'International institutions, decolonization and development,' *International Political Science Review*, 14 (1), 1993, p 82.

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Published quarterly by The MIT Press for the IO Foundation. ISSN 0020-8183

Greening the United Nations: environmental organisations and the UN system

KEN CONCA

Environmental problems cry out for effective international governance. Pollution, habitat destruction and ecosystem degradation offer stark evidence of human power to transform the earth.¹ There are good reasons to doubt the effectiveness of centralised, hierarchical schemes of 'planetary management', and to worry about the political and social implications of such efforts.² But in a world where environmental damage and its social consequences ignore borders, substantial and effective international cooperation is essential.

It has been over two decades since the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment placed environmental problems on the global agenda. The period since the Stockholm meeting has witnessed a flurry of environmental diplomacy by governments. The list of multilateral environmental agreements has grown dramatically; states have crafted accords on problems as diverse as ocean pollution, acid rain, climate change, the ozone layer, the trade in endangered species, biological diversity, the hazardous waste trade and environmental protection in Antarctica.³ The 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held on the 20th anniversary of the Stockholm conference, saw over 150 governments gather in Rio de Janeiro to endorse Agenda 21, an ambitious plan to promote ecologically sustainable development into the 21st century.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the problems are outpacing these displays of interstate cooperation. The effectiveness of most major international agreements remains to be demonstrated; most fail to grapple with the underlying political, economic and social practices that create environmental harm. Similarly, without clear political and financial commitments from most of the governments that endorsed it, Agenda 21 is being transformed from an ambitious plan of action into a tacit admission of failure. As Mostafa Tolba, former executive director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), suggested in 1992:

I am obliged to report to governments and the public that progress has slowed. The commitment to set up ministries and to enter into international agreements has not always led to an equal commitment to action. Environment Ministries exist, but their role in national decision-making is frequently marginal. Agreements have been entered into freely, but the will to enforce them has often been lacking.

There is a paradox here. On the one hand public concern has been growing steadily, as manifested by the growing power and influence of "green consumers" ... On the other hand, the pace of government action has faltered.⁴

There are several reasons for the ineffectiveness of state responses. Sovereignty fragments political authority, creating well-known barriers to international cooperation.⁵ Environmental problems also challenge states to evolve new scientific and managerial capabilities, much as the socioeconomic crises of the industrial revolution forced the evolution of the welfare state in industrialised societies. These problems are exacerbated by economic globalisation and the growth of transnational economic power, which make it harder for states to control effectively or regulate environmentally harmful economic activities. Perhaps the biggest obstacle is that state power historically has been closely tied to environmental destruction, in both industrialised and post-colonial societies. The economic importance of natural resource extraction, the links between territorial control and sovereign recognition, the power that flows from the ability to assign property rights and define patterns of access to nature—for all these reasons, most states emerged historically from elite social bargains that have allowed for, or even demanded, dramatic forms of environmental transformation.

When states prove unwilling or unable to respond, nonstate actors represent hope for change. Paul Wapner describes two processes by which environmental organisations, and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) more generally, may exert political influence in world politics.⁶ First, and most obviously, they may be able to pressure, cajole, or otherwise influence states. But NGOs may also influence values, social behaviour and collective choice more generally among large groups of people—creating a form of ‘world civic politics’ in which state behaviour becomes less central to collective choice. This formulation is not unlike the two forms of influence attributed to international organisations, which may serve as institutions that shape the pattern of state-based bargaining, or as facilitators of broader processes of global dialogue, value convergence and social transformation.

In the more than two decades since the Stockholm conference, environmental organisations and the United Nations system have evolved a complex and multidimensional relationship, with many forms of engagement emerging on many levels. Both partners in the relationship contribute to this complexity. Environmental NGOs form a complex, multifaceted and often divided community. Similarly, even as the UN plays an important role in fostering international environmental dialogue and cooperation, its specialised agencies often behave in ways that constitute a significant part of the problem.

Environmental organisations and the UN system: an overview

Before the Stockholm conference, environmental organisations played only a limited role within the United Nations, just as the world organisation itself played only a limited role in environmental matters. The conservation of natural resources was made part of the constitutional mandate of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), although its emphasis on natural resource production and extraction severely curtailed its environmental focus. The UN Educational, Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) played an important role in the 1948 formation of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), a body with governmental and NGO affiliates.⁷ IUCN in turn spun off an important

environmental NGO, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), as an independent fund-raising body in 1961.⁸ Other notable pre-Stockholm activities included the International Geophysical Year from 1957 to 1958, IUCN's First World Conference on National Parks in 1962 and UNESCO's Biosphere Conference of scientific experts in 1968.⁹

The Stockholm conference marked a watershed in UN deliberations on the environment and in the engagement of environmental NGOs with the United Nations system. Both the conference itself and the preparations for it raised international awareness.¹⁰ Stockholm also led to the formation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), a small but at times effective body headquartered in Nairobi. In addition, Stockholm framed two of the core debates that dominate international environmental politics to this day: sharp disagreements over the relationship between environment and development, and governmental resistance to pressures that states compromise sovereign authority over natural resources and ecosystems within their territory.

Stockholm was also a milestone for international environmentalism. Environmental NGOs gathered in unprecedented numbers; 134 organisations engaged in the official proceedings, with many more involved in the protests, networking, consciousness-raising and other 'unofficial' activities linked to the conference.¹¹ Stockholm also marked the transition from a movement dominated by relatively depoliticised conservation groups to one heavily influenced by the 'new environmentalism' of the 1960s.¹² Finally, nongovernmental organisations at Stockholm reflected the pervasiveness of North-South divisions: southern NGOs accounted for only about 10% of those participating.¹³

Since then, as the United Nations has become a more important forum on environmental matters, environmental organisations have become more involved in several ways and on several levels. They lobby in the diverse bodies that make up the United Nations system, from the specialised agencies to broader forums such as the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Environmental organisations also shape the positions of member states through domestic pressure and, increasingly, transnational efforts. NGOs also provide information, analysis and value-based interpretations that shape how problems, interests and solutions are defined. Finally, environmental organisations are playing a growing role in delivering services at the local, regional and even national level, receiving and administering UN funds in the process.

Within the United Nations system, these various forms of engagement take place on several levels: in specialised agencies and other functional bodies within the system; in relations with UNEP; in the various global conferences, international meetings and intergovernmental bargaining sessions that have occurred under UN auspices; and in the recently formed Commission on Sustainable Development, a high-level body within ECOSOC charged with monitoring the implementation of UNCED's Agenda 21.

It is difficult to estimate the number of environmental organisations engaged with the United Nations in these various ways. One reason is the fuzzy boundary between the environment and other issue areas. Many, but not all, of the larger and more influential NGOs define themselves as 'environmental' in relatively

narrow terms. But it is often impossible to say where an environmental organisation ends and one dealing with a host of other issues—human rights, grassroots development, public health, the concerns of indigenous peoples, women in development—begins. These blurry boundaries and the alliances they make possible can be a source of great strength for environmental organisations and coalitions. Yet they make it difficult to describe a neatly delimited 'environmental' community.

A second complication is that only a relative handful of environmental organisations are truly transnational. There is no question that within the environmental community, large and well-funded transnational organisations such as the Worldwide Fund for Nature or Greenpeace enjoy greater access to UN deliberations.¹⁴ Limiting the definition of the relevant community of organisations to those with transnational operations would miss the important and growing role of local and regional NGOs, and would present a skewed subset of the full range of views, tactics, and strategies that environmental organisations bring to bear.¹⁵ An important part of the international pressure on governments to live up to the rhetoric of UNCED has come from local organisations participating in national or transnational networks. Such networks can vary greatly in the formality of their organisation, the tightness of their coordination and the stability of their membership.¹⁶ Emphasising only the most formally institutionalised organisations would also steer the focus toward traditional lobbying practices and away from the important consciousness-raising activities of environmentalists, many of which are relatively loosely coordinated and formalised.

Given these complexities, perhaps the best way to characterise the relevant set of environmental organisations is as a set of concentric circles. In the centre circle we find a handful of truly transnational organisations—those with well-institutionalised transnational operations, based on an organisational presence in many different countries.¹⁷ This allows for a strong and consistent presence in international conferences, negotiations and deliberations by intergovernmental organisations. Examples include Greenpeace, with nearly six million members worldwide, affiliated offices in 30 countries and an annual budget of about \$100 million; the Worldwide Fund for Nature, with three million members, 28 national affiliate groups and an annual budget of some \$170 million; and Friends of the Earth International, with half a million members and national affiliate groups in 46 countries.¹⁸

Also included in the centre circle are a small number of important environmental think tanks, international NGO networks and informational clearing-houses—groups with the funding, reputation and transnational connections to have a consistent presence in the international arena. Some of the most influential think tanks are the Washington-based World Resources Institute (WRI) and Worldwatch Institute and the London-based International Institute for Environment and Development. Important networks include the Earth Council, a network of eminent persons formed by UNCED Secretary-General, Maurice Strong; the Centre for Our Common Future, a Geneva-based organisation emerging in the wake of the Brundtland Commission report, *Our Common Future*; and the Third World Network, a coalition of organisations and individuals engaged in research, information dissemination, organising and advocacy on

issues related to development, the environment, the Third World and North-South relations.¹⁹ International scientific groups also weigh in with substantial influence, derived in part from the technical complexity of environmental problems, but also from the relatively good access to governments that such groups often enjoy.

One step removed from this core group, the second circle captures a considerably larger set of organisations with some capacity to operate internationally or have a presence in international forums. The number of organisations falling into this circle is closer to a few hundred than to the few dozen found in the inner circle. Environmental organisations probably account for less than 10% of the roughly 1000 NGOs with ECOSOC accreditation. The recently formed UN Commission on Sustainable Development, which reports to ECOSOC, has accredited 550 NGOs within its first two years, and UNCED accredited more than 1400. Finger estimates that some 1600 groups participated in the NGO Global Forum held during the UNCED conference.²⁰

The outermost circle in this simple model includes the large and apparently rapidly growing number of local, regional and national environmental organisations that enjoy only sporadic access to international debates. Although a comprehensive estimate of their number is impossible, most observers have put the figure in the tens of thousands or more. The Geneva-based Centre for Our Common Future distributes *The Independent Sectors' Network*, its monthly NGO newsletter, to over 30 000 organisations and individual subscribers. Fisher estimates that there are about 200 000 grassroots NGOs in the South and over 30 000 'grassroots support organisations' channelling funding, expertise and assistance to the grassroots.²¹ Although these figures do not refer solely to 'environmental' NGOs, the distinction between environmental groups and those working on issues such as public health, basic human needs or family planning is often an arbitrary one at the local level.

The diversity of the groups in all three circles and the heterogeneity of their goals can be a source of great strength for environmentalism as a global social movement. For example, efforts to reform multilateral lending procedures for development assistance have been strengthened by South-North coalitions of NGOs able to pressure both donor and recipient governments simultaneously. But the concentric-circles model also reveals a highly unequal distribution of power and access, particularly in North-South terms. Roughly speaking, the further one moves out from the centre circle, the more difficult it becomes to have effective access to the United Nations system. And the further from the centre, the fuzzier the issue-area boundaries become between the environment and other concerns, reflecting the role of power and access in defining exactly what constitutes the 'environmental issue area' in international settings.

The experience of environmental groups within the UN system

Given the many forms of contemporary environmentalism, and the many levels on which nongovernmental organisations engage the United Nations, it is difficult to generalise about the experience of environmental organisations within the United Nations system. Efforts to work with or pressure the specialised

agencies have varied greatly in effectiveness. UNEP has been an important resource or a useful entry point for some NGOs, but an irrelevancy or a missed opportunity for others. The picture is further complicated by the complex implications of the UNCED conference, and by the emergence of the Commission on Sustainable Development as a potential focal point in the post-UNCED era. What follows is not a comprehensive assessment of this complex and fluid situation, but rather a series of snapshots meant to show the range of NGO experience and the dilemmas of NGO engagement with the United Nations on environmental matters.

Engaging the specialized agencies

Before the 1990s most NGO attention focused on the specialised agencies for several reasons. To be sure, some—notably FAO, the World Health organization (WHO) and the World Bank group—have drawn attention because their functional mandates intersect with the environmental agenda in important ways. The focus on the specialised agencies also reflected their autonomy, and the absence of overarching UN institutions that dealt with questions of environmental governance, as well as the inability of UNEP to carry out its hopeless mandate as system-wide coordinator on environmental matters.

The specialised agencies date from a pre-environmental era. They have standard operating procedures that were formed, and deeply institutionalised, with little attention to environmental considerations. They are also classically bureaucratic entities that exhibit the full range of turf-grabbing, mission-defending and budget-enhancing behaviour common to large bureaucratic organisations. Most, when confronted with environmental demands in the post-Stockholm era, have exhibited a complex combination of turf-building and turf-defending behaviour. The environment has been a powerful argument for programmatic expansion, but also a threat to traditional operating procedures. Thus, it is no surprise that organisations such as FAO and the World Bank can embrace the concept of sustainable development, or that WHO has begun to redefine its view of health to include that of the planet.²² At the same time, these organisations have often resisted change in the traditional practices that environmentalists find so disturbing, as in the resistance of FAO and WHO to stronger international standards on pesticides.²³

This presents environmental NGOs with complex choices. On the innovative margin of an agency's activities, where core practices are not threatened, there may be opportunities for effective collaboration. But altering an agency's core practices generally requires a more confrontational stance, in which NGOs generate political pressure. Two campaigns of the 1980s—the effort for environmental reform of the World Bank's lending practices and the effort to institutionalise the Tropical Forestry Action Plan—illustrate the difficulties of sustaining this combined cooperative and conflictual stance.

The World Bank campaign. Of all the agencies and intergovernmental organisations affiliated with the United Nations, the World Bank is perhaps the most

consequential in environmental terms.²⁴ It maintains a lending portfolio on the order of \$20 billion annually. Excluding the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which moves a similar amount on an annual basis, this figure is nearly an order of magnitude greater than the combined budgets of the approximately 20 other functional agencies affiliated with the UN system.²⁵

The orientation of World Bank lending also has important environmental consequences. Its emphasis on infrastructural development such as roads, bridges, dams and power stations has produced several ecological disasters. The bank is also a central environmental actor because of its status as an intellectual and policy leader among development assistance institutions; its behaviour exerts a strong influence on a wide range of bilateral and multilateral organisations.

A loose coalition of environmental organisations began a public campaign in the mid-1980s to reform the World Bank's lending practices. Several high-profile examples of bank-funded disasters, including the Polonoroeste colonisation project in the Brazilian Amazon and the Sardar Sarovar dam in north-central India, were used to sharpen the critical focus and emerged as symbols of the Bank's failings. Nongovernmental organisations brought pressure on several levels at once by lobbying donor governments; pressuring and cajoling recipient governments; mounting public demonstrations and informational campaigns; advocating policy alternatives; and cultivating alliances with sympathetic staffers within the bank itself.²⁶

NGOs realised significant gains through the World Bank campaign. Internal reorganisation has boosted staffing in environmental positions and created a somewhat greater incorporation of environmental considerations into project evaluation. The bank also began funding projects with an environmental focus (19 projects totalling \$1.2 billion in fiscal 1992, according to the bank's figures).²⁷ In 1994 the bank also agreed, under strong NGO pressure, to create an inspection panel for public accountability. Affected parties in borrower countries may now file complaints that the World Bank has failed to follow its own policies, procedures and conditions in the context of a specific loan.²⁸ The panel is by no means a perfect vehicle for NGOs; the initial decision of whether to follow a complaint with an inspection remains shrouded in secrecy, and borrower countries must approve on-site inspections. Moreover, 'local representation' requirements prevent donor-country NGOs from filing claims. But the panel should be an important resource for NGOs to publicise the bank's failures and gain access to project records. Although the selection of panelists was shrouded in the usual bank secrecy, the procedures for filing claims are relatively open and simple.

The World Bank campaign has also been instructive for what has not changed. As Bruce Rich of the Environmental Defense Fund, a leader in the NGO campaign, said in 1990:

Environmentalists were guardedly optimistic about [Bank President Barber] Conable's new-found commitment to reform at the time. Now, three years later, it is apparent that the emperor's new clothes bear only faint traces of green. Instead of becoming a leading environmental lender, the Bank has become an arena where the political, practical, and theoretical difficulties of reconciling economic development with ecological sustainability are most glaring. The Bank continues to stress

its commitment to the environment, but deep institutional and political contradictions prevent it from implementing reform in any meaningful way ...²⁹

Rich identifies barriers on four levels: 'internal contradictions' in the bank's hierarchical, segmented bureaucratic organisation; pressures from both donors and borrower governments to keep the money moving; a lack of accountability to either donors or borrowers; and contradictions between ecological sustainability and the bank's development model of growth, industrialisation and privatisation.

The campaign's complex mix of successes and failures illustrates the challenge facing environmental organisations in trying to change the specialised agencies. The campaign required consistent pressure, grounded in harsh criticism and confrontation, to move the World Bank to action. At the same time, however, forging cooperative relationships with potential allies in the bank and among donor-government agencies was crucial to realise those gains.

The Tropical Forestry Action Plan. In 1983 FAO's Committee on Forest Development in the Tropics charged FAO with developing an 'Action Programme' on the growing problem of tropical deforestation.³⁰ At that time, the World Resources Institute, an influential Washington-based environmental policy institute, convened a series of meetings that produced an international task force in conjunction with UNDP and the World Bank.³¹ The FAO and WRI efforts in the Tropical Forestry Action Plan (TFAP), converged a framework for guiding development assistance in tropical forestry.

TFAP encourages developing countries to submit national plans for sustainable development in the forestry sector.³² FAO coordinates review and implementation of the plan for a range of bilateral and multilateral donors and UN agencies. TFAP has produced both a substantial increase in forestry-sector aid and a consolidation of activities by the over 40 aid agencies active in tropical forestry. WRI estimated that by 1990 funding commitments in forestry had 'at least doubled', to more than \$1 billion annually, and that this would rise to \$2 billion if all projects in the TFAP pipeline were indeed funded.³³ A 1994 FAO update reported 90 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America involved in TFAP exercises, ranging from initial planning to implementation of funded plans.³⁴

Together with bilateral and multilateral lenders, environmental organisations were instrumental in creating TFAP. WRI in particular played a crucial role in generating momentum for the initiative and influencing its policy framework. An unofficial body, the 'Forestry Advisors' Group', emerged as a regular contact point between TFAP funders and mainstream nongovernmental organisations.³⁵

As its full implications have become clearer, however, TFAP has received increasingly scathing criticism from environmentalists, including some groups involved in its formulation.³⁶ The most common criticisms have been the failure to involve local participation in planning; lack of NGO access to both implementation and review processes; a narrow forest-sector vision of the problem; and the emphasis on expanding timber yields. Even when funded national plans have genuinely sought to promote a sustainable timber yield, the FAO approach frequently overlooks associated environmental concerns related to forest regener-



ation, biological diversity and climate.³⁷ Many critics argue that TFAP is a net contributor to tropical deforestation:

Far from attempting to tackle the root causes of deforestation, TFAP focuses almost exclusively on promoting commercial forestry ... The focus on the administrative failings of TFAP has enabled FAO to sidestep the more substantive criticisms of TFAP's underlying policies ... FAO has learned little from its TFAP critics: although the rhetoric has changed, the approach is still top-down, commercially-oriented, and, if adopted, likely to exacerbate the deforestation crisis.³⁸

Perhaps consistent NGO pressure will eventually yield a thorough overhaul of TFAP. It would be grossly overstating their power to lay full or even principal blame on the environmental organisations involved in its formulation. There were notable differences from the start, for example, between WRI's vision and the FAO formulation that TFAP has reflected in practice. But the participation of mainstream environmental organisations lent environmental legitimacy to a badly flawed process—one that has probably, on balance, done more harm than good to the world's tropical forests. TFAP therefore stands as a cautionary tale of the difficulties of striking an effective balance between cooperation and conflict with the specialised agencies.

Global conferencing: the implications of UNCED

The 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development marked a watershed in NGO activities within the United Nations system for several reasons. Compared to Stockholm, UNCED saw explosive growth in the scale and scope of NGO participation. The greater NGO presence at UNCED reflected the general growth in environmental NGOs during the 1980s, particularly in the South. The multistage, protracted nature of the 'UNCED process'—the Brundtland Commission activities, the UNCED Preparatory Committee meetings, national reporting efforts and planning for the parallel Global Forum of NGOs—also played a key role in mobilising NGOs. UNCED also used accreditation rules for nongovernmental organisations that were loose by UN standards, establishing what may be an important precedent. By the end of the fourth and final PrepCom, 1 420 NGOs had been accredited in addition to those already accredited to ECOSOC.³⁹

Nongovernmental organisations enjoyed not only an unprecedented presence at UNCED but also greater influence. The most important vehicle for influence was the relative success of NGOs in getting on national delegations; Finger reports that at least 14 countries had environmental NGO representatives on their national delegations.⁴⁰ But accredited NGOs also gained access to PrepCom sessions and some albeit limited access to draft materials and working documents. This afforded the opportunity to at least comment and lobby during PrepCom sessions, where much of the actual politicking took place.⁴¹ Five environmental NGOs—IUCN, Greenpeace, Environment and Development Action in the Third World, the Conservation Foundation and the Environmental Defense Fund—were able to place a representative among the 120 individuals making up the working parties of the PrepCom sessions.⁴⁴

Despite these tangible gains, both UNCED and the parallel Global Forum

revealed deep divisions within the environmental movement. Although accredited nongovernmental organisations had access to official working sessions during the PrepComs, they enjoyed no such access to the official session at UNCED, except as national delegation members. Despite the relatively looser accreditation standards and greater access to draft materials, the main source of NGO influence during official proceedings was to have a presence on national delegations. This meant that NGOs on the national delegations of the most influential states enjoyed the greatest influence among NGOs. Not surprisingly, this amplified the voice of relatively well-heeled, mainstream, northern environmental organisations and, in particular, several of the larger groups that were within the NGO community based in the USA.

The Global Forum, a concurrent meeting among nongovernmental organisations during UNCED, also revealed tensions among environmental NGOs. Several of the more progressive ones chafed at the way in which the forum was organised by the International Facilitating Committee, an offshoot of the Centre for Our Common Future in Geneva.⁴³ Led by the Nairobi-based Environmental Liaison Committee International, these groups organised an International NGO Forum, in which alternatives to the official UNCED agreements were negotiated among nongovernmental organisations. These alternative negotiations proved contentious; according to Grubb:

These negotiations between the NGOs at UNCED were certainly not as difficult as the official negotiations, but they were hardly easy, and it requires little imagination to foresee the depth of disputes had they been negotiating real policy and trying to take account of the full range of viewpoints and affected parties (for example by including NGOs from industry or trade unions).⁴⁴

Finger describes three increasingly distinct factions clearly visible at UNCED. 'Mainstream' NGOs, mostly US-based, enjoyed the most influence and exhibited the greatest willingness to compromise with actors wielding political and economic power. 'Political' NGOs, including the European Greens as well as many Third World NGOs, were frustrated with the relatively technocratic proceedings, the limits of NGO political influence and the tendency of UNCED to reproduce the debates of Stockholm 20 years earlier. 'Consciousness-raising' NGOs, more interested in promoting broad social transformation through consciousness-raising than in direct engagement in lobbying, exerting pressure and related forms of political action, represented yet another distinct group.⁴⁵

UNEP: a missed opportunity?

Though small, chronically underfunded and marginal within the UN constellation, the United Nations Environment Programme has evolved into a relatively effective organisation. With a professional staff and budget akin to a small liberal arts college, UNEP officials quickly realised that the organisation's marginal status within the UN system would prevent it from accomplishing its coordinating mandate. Instead, UNEP came to define its role as a catalyst for international cooperation.⁴⁶

UNEP's record is uneven. The South's power within UNEP's Governing Council

provoked destabilising conflict with its principal funders during UNEP's early years. There have also been some notably failed initiatives, most glaringly the campaign on desertification.⁴⁷ Yet several UNEP initiatives to foster international cooperation have met with substantial success, including its regional seas programme and its role in the negotiations on stratospheric ozone depletion.

NGOs have been a key part of UNEP's approach. UNEP has fostered the growth of the Environmental Liaison Centre (ELC), a Nairobi-based network and informational clearing house for over 6 000 NGOs with an emphasis on environment-development concerns. UNEP also played a crucial role in providing NGOs access to the international negotiations on stratospheric ozone.⁴⁸ UNEP's relative openness to nongovernmental organisations can be explained in part by its small size and marginal status, which created a continual need to build alliances. However, UNEP's attempt to define itself as an 'honest broker' of knowledge and information has also been an important factor.⁴⁹

UNEP's openness to and support for NGOs has not always been reciprocated. As momentum grew within the United Nations system during the 1980s for a major review of environment and development issues, UNEP lost its bid to play a central role. Several developments marginalised UNEP's role: the decision to form the independent World Commission on Environment and Development; the choice of Stockholm Conference organiser Maurice Strong as UNCED secretary-general rather than UNEP's Mostafa Tolba; and the decision that UNCED would report to the General Assembly rather than UNEP, breaking precedent with the first post-Stockholm review, held in Nairobi in 1982.⁵⁰ Strong NGO support may not have reversed any of these decisions, but would probably have enabled a stronger role for UNEP. In hindsight, a stronger UNEP role might well have facilitated more meaningful NGO access to some of UNCED's deliberations, particularly for southern nongovernmental organisations.

In the post-UNCED era, UNEP's role and status are uncertain. Member governments have supported substantial growth in its budget in recent years, to \$100 million in 1993 compared with \$20 million in 1973, its first year of operation.⁵¹ Further growth may be a mixed blessing; as Imber points out, 'The role UNEP enjoys has been secured by virtue of resisting the inherently inflationary tendencies characteristic of UN agencies ...'⁵² It is clear that even a dramatically expanded UNEP will not evolve into the sort of system-wide coordinating body that states envisioned at Stockholm, but never funded.

The Commission on Sustainable Development

Just as UNEP was the only official UN institutional reform after Stockholm, UNCED also produced a single formal institutional reform: the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). Just as UNEP received an unworkable mandate of system-wide coordination, so too has the CSD. Established in 1993, the commission's official purpose is to coordinate UN activities on the environment and to monitor national and international implementation of Agenda 21. Its 53 member states are chosen by a regional formula; Germany is the current chair, with Brazil, India, Namibia and Poland as vice chairs. The commission has met annually since 1993. The first two meetings were devoted principally to

commission rules and procedures, as well as setting an agenda for those aspects of Agenda 21 upon which it will focus in upcoming meetings.

In principle, the CSD affords an important opportunity for NGO involvement. The General Assembly has stated that the commission should 'provide for non-governmental organisations, including those related to major groups as well as industry and the scientific and business communities, to participate effectively in its work ...'.⁵³ As of this writing, 550 nongovernmental organisations have been accredited, using procedures less stringent than those of ECOSOC.⁵⁴ Accredited NGOs can work the halls, coordinate activities, make brief oral statements, and submit written statements, although they pay for reproduction and distribution themselves, unlike ECOSOC. NGOs with Category I consultative status may also propose agenda items.

It remains to be seen whether the commission can effectively coordinate system wide activities on the environment. Arguing that UNCED revealed the UN's institutional 'Catch 22', Bergesen voiced a common belief among sceptics: 'You cannot change the institutional structure without [first] changing the institutional structure'.⁵⁵ Even if the CSD fails in this regard, it may still afford opportunities for environmental NGOs. The UN Association of the United States, for example, argues several potential benefits. These include not only the commission's substantive work, the informational value of the proceedings and the chance to improve NGO-UN relations, but also such factors as the opportunity for long-range planning afforded by the annual meeting format and pre-set agenda, the value of an accurate historical record in the post-UNCED era and the chance to reinforce NGO efforts elsewhere within the United Nations system.⁵⁶

Dilemmas of engaging the United Nations

Environmental organisations seeking to work within the UN system must make fundamentally political choices such as where best to target NGO efforts, how best to effectively broaden NGO access and how to translate the many strands of environmentalism into a source of strength in diversity as opposed to internal divisiveness and friction. These choices will help shape the future direction of environmentalism as a global social movement; they will also help determine whether the United Nations is to be a more effective mechanism of environmental governance, an irrelevant bureaucracy or an obstacle to the global transformations that are so urgently required.

The choice of entry points. Most environmental organisations are all too familiar with the need to establish priorities in the face of resource constraints. With regard to the United Nations, the most difficult choice may be between the traditional focus on the specialised agencies and the growing need to raise environmental concerns in broader, cross-cutting arenas. In the post-UNCED era, the discourse of environmentalism is clearly moving in the direction of cross-cutting themes. The traditional ecosystemic focus on air, land, water and species is giving way to a social-systems focus on international trade, global finance, sovereignty, development and other key processes and institutions. The old focus

was consistent with the functional organisation of the United Nations into specialised agencies; the emerging focus demands a new forum.

The temptation is great to shift attention to institutions such as the Commission on Sustainable Development, which hold out the possibility of broader policy coordination that cuts across the traditional functional categories. The danger is that this shift will draw NGO and other resources away from the specialised agencies, just as engagement and pressure have begun to make inroads. There is a critical need for a forum in which to debate questions of sovereignty, ecology, political economy and North–South relations in a broader, more representative setting than the G-7 or the World Trade Organization (WTO) can provide. The question is whether the Commission on Sustainable Development, an adjunct of ECOSOC, can provide such a forum when ECOSOC itself has largely failed to do so.

The question of access. UNCED established an important precedent for NGO participation and the trend has continued with the relative openness of the Commission on Sustainable Development. Broadening participation typically yields a messier, less manageable process; consequently, there were tensions between older nongovernmental organisations with long-standing consultative status and the newer generation at UNCED.

Such tensions will deepen unless expanding access also transforms the nature of NGO participation. If the total amount of time and space for NGOs remain tightly controlled, and if most NGOs continue to be excluded from crucial informal and ‘formal–informal’ discussions, then expanding access may mean no more than forcing more nongovernmental organisations to crowd their literature onto the same display tables or compete for a fixed amount of speaking time. Under such conditions, organisations with their foot already in the door are unlikely to remain champions of greater NGO access for long. The tensions will be particularly acute—as they were at UNCED—between those organisations seeking to achieve specific policy-based outcomes and those seeking to use the United Nations system as a broader forum for global dialogue. The challenge facing nongovernmental organisations, and particularly those with relatively good access already, is to use the pressures to expand access as a way to transform the nature of NGO participation.

Coalition dynamics, power and the North–South divide. The emergence of the concept of ‘sustainable development’ is sometimes said to have transcended traditional North–South conflict on environment and development. UNCED revealed that deep North–South divisions remain, and that they are not limited to governments. According to Grubb, ‘... At UNCED, the gulf between the biggest environmental NGOs and many Southern NGOs in particular seemed almost as huge as that between their respective governments on some (though not all) issues’.⁵⁷

Effective North–South alliances have been built when interests have converged, as in the World Bank campaign. Institutionalising such alliances will require moving beyond utilitarian cooperation and towards greater convergence

networks. Of those listed, several are best described not as 'environmental', but rather as organisations with a broader mandate that may intersect with environmental matters; examples include the International Chamber of Commerce, the International Organisation of Consumer Unions, and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. Removing such organisations from the list leaves 10 multinational NGOs and one mixed-membership body, the World Conservation Union.

¹⁸ Data on national affiliate groups and budgets are from the appendix to Bergesen, *Green Globe Yearbook 1992*, and Paul Wagner, 'Environmental activism and global civil society', *Dissent*, Summer 1994, pp 389-393.

¹⁹ The international secretariat of the Third World Network is based in Penang, Malaysia, with offices in Accra, Delhi, Geneva, London and Montevideo.

²⁰ Matthias Finger, 'Environmental NGOs in the UNCED process', in Finger & Princen, *Environmental NGOs in World Politics*, p 204.

²¹ Julie Fisher, 'Third World NGOs: a missing piece to the population puzzle', *Environment*, 36 (7), 1994, pp 6-11, 37-41.

²² For an example of the Bank's rhetorical embrace of sustainable development, see the 1992 edition of *World Development Report*, Washington, DC: World Bank, 1992. On who see World Health Organization, *Our Planet, Our Health: Report of the WHO Commission on Health and Environment*, Geneva: WHO, 1992.

²³ Khalil Sasmou, 'FAO: an insider's view', *The Ecologist*, 21 (2), 1991, pp 47-56. The author, writing under a pseudonym, is identified as a 'senior FAO official'.

²⁴ On the Bank and the environment, see Bruce Rich, *Mortgaging the Earth: The World Bank, Environmental Impoverishment, and the Crisis of Development*, Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1994; and Philippe G Le Prestre, *The World Bank and the Environmental Challenge*, Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 1989. See also the Bank's annual reports *The World Bank and the Environment*, a series begun in 1990.

²⁵ Calculated from Peter R Bachr & Leon Gordenker, *The United Nations in the 1990s* New York: St Martin's Press, 1992, Table 2.1.

²⁶ See Pat Aulderheide & Bruce Rich, 'Environmental reform and the multilateral banks', *World Policy Journal*, 5 (2) 1988, pp 301-321.

²⁷ World Bank, *The World Bank and the Environment: Fiscal 1992*, Washington, DC: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development 1992.

²⁸ The following summary draws upon David B Hunter & Lori Udall, 'The World Bank's new inspection panel' *Environment*, 36 (9), 1994, pp 2-3, 44-45. The authors are affiliated with the Center for International Environmental Law and the Environmental Defense Fund, respectively, two NGOs instrumental in pressuring the Bank on this issue.

²⁹ Bruce Rich, 'The emperor's new clothes: the World Bank and environmental reform', *World Policy Journal*, 7 (2) 1990, pp 305-329. A more hopeful view is offered by Kenneth Piddington, 'The role of the World Bank', in Andrew Hurrell & Benedict Kingsbury (eds), *The International Politics of the Environment*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1992. Piddington was Director of the Bank's Environment Department, 1988-1991.

³⁰ On the history of the Tropical Forestry Action Plan, see Robert Winterbottom, *Taking Stock: The Tropical Forestry Action Plan After Five Years*, Washington, DC: World Resources Institute, June 1990.

³¹ Task force recommendations were published in 1985; see World Resources Institute, *Tropical Forests: A Call for Action*, Washington, DC: WRI, October 1985.

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³⁴ FAO, *IFAP Update 31*, Rome: FAO, June 1994. IFAP reporting is handled by the IFAP Coordinating Unit within FAO's Forestry Department.

³⁵ Winterbottom lists WRI, The World Conservation Union (IUCN), the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations (IUFRO), the Environmental Liaison Committee International (ELCI) and the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) as regular participants. See Winterbottom, *Taking Stock*, p 8ff.

³⁶ See for example Rich, 'The emperor's new clothes' or the special edition on FAO of *The Ecologist*, 21 (2) 1991. WRI itself produced a strongly critical assessment of the IFAP in 1991, emphasising the narrowness of IFAP's vision and a wide range of implementation failures. See Winterbottom, *Taking Stock*.

³⁷ See Nels Johnson & Bruce Cabarle, *Surviving the Cut: Natural Forest Management in the Humid Tropics*, Washington, DC: World Resources Institute, February 1993.

³⁸ George Marshall, 'FAO and tropical forestry', *The Ecologist* 21 (2), 1991, pp 66-72.

³⁹ Finger, 'Environmental NGOs in the UNCED process', p 200.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p 208. The countries were Norway, Sweden, the UK, Denmark, Finland, Canada, New Zealand, the USA, Australia, the Netherlands, the Commonwealth of Independent States, India, Switzerland and France.

- ⁴¹ Michael Grubb, Matthias Koch, Abby Munson, Francis Sullivan & Koy Thomson, *The Earth Summit Agreements: A Guide and Assessment*, London: Earthscan Publications, 1993, p 44.
- ⁴² Finger, 'Environmental NGOs in the UNCED process', p 196.
- ⁴³ Ibid, pp 203-206.
- ⁴⁴ Grubb, *The Earth Summit Agreements*, p 46.
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- ⁴⁶ On the origins and workings of UNEP see Mark Imber, 'Too many cooks? The post-Rio reform of the United Nations', *International Affairs*, 69 (1), pp 55-70; Peter M Haas, 'Institutions: United Nations Environment Programme', *Environment*, 36 (7), 1994, pp 43-45; Caldwell, *International Environmental Policy*.
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- ⁵⁰ Finger, 'Environmental NGOs in the UNCED process', p 195.
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- ⁵⁴ NGOs applying for consultative status with ECOSOC must be approved unanimously by the 19-member Committee on NGOs. If accredited, they submit written testimony and ask to be heard at Council meetings.
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1996 - Volume 24 (4 issues). ISSN 0963-7494

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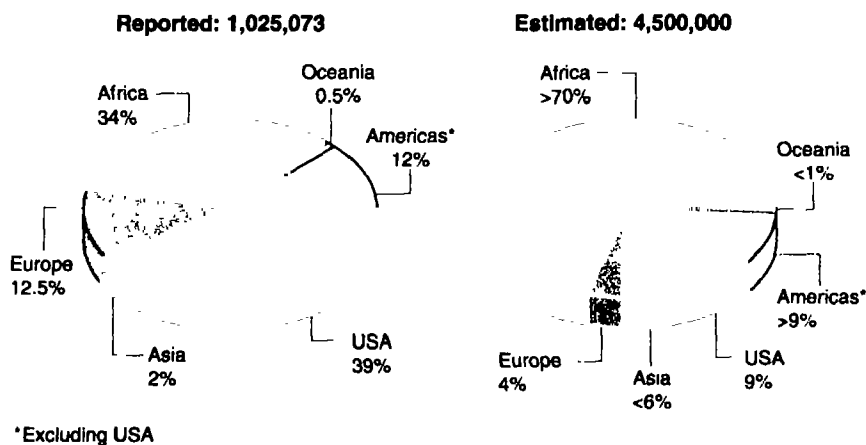
IGO-NGO relations and HIV/AIDS: innovation or stalemate?

CHRISTER JÖNSSON & PETER SÖDERHOLM

In 1981 the symptoms later labelled acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) were encountered for the first time among five homosexual men in Los Angeles, California. Few people, if any, at that time could possibly have foreseen the consequences of the diagnosis. By the end of 1994 over one million AIDS cases had been reported to the World Health Organization (WHO). Taking under-reporting into account, WHO estimates that about 4.5 million men, women and children are now suffering from AIDS (see Fig. 1).

Projections into the future indicate that we have witnessed only the beginning of the pandemic. Over 14 million persons are carriers of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. The average incubation time of 10 years, with asymptomatic carriers continuously spreading the virus, leads to estimates ranging from 40 million to 100 million HIV-infected individuals by the year 2000.¹

In little more than a decade, AIDS has provoked responses on an unprecedented scale in the history of health. A gradual realisation that AIDS was not confined to certain high-risk groups, but was affecting every corner of the world, provoked calls for international action. The United Nations (UN) system, with its reputation and expertise in health as well as social and economic develop-



Source: WHO Global Programme on AIDS GPA/SERSG95009 12 January 1995

Fig. 1. Total number of AIDS cases in adults and children from the late 1970s until late 1994.

Source: WHO Global Programme on AIDS GPA/SERSG 95009 12 January 1995.

ment, was soon compelled to mount a response to the disease. The UN, it was thought, could substantially help mobilise governments and international organisations to develop policies to prevent and control HIV/AIDS, and to mitigate the economic and social consequences resulting from the virus.

A global offensive was launched in 1987, 'the year of global AIDS mobilization'.² In May of that year WHO initiated its Special Programme on AIDS, later known as the Global Programme on AIDS (GPA). In October AIDS was discussed by the UN General Assembly, the first time a specific disease was considered by that forum. Another watershed was the January 1988 world summit of health ministers, attended by delegates from 148 countries, which issued the so-called London Declaration on AIDS Prevention. Endorsing the WHO GPA, the document called for 'the involvement of all relevant governmental sectors and nongovernmental organizations in creating the supportive social environment needed to ensure the effective implementation of AIDS prevention programmes and humane care of affected individuals'.³

The stage was thus set for global collaboration by a broad range of organisational actors. This paper draws on a collaborative study, more fully reported elsewhere, which uses an interorganisational approach to trace the emergence of transnational cooperative structures in response to AIDS.⁴ Of chief concern here are the efforts at creating and maintaining links among and between intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) in the UN system and the many heterogeneous organisations usually lumped together under the NGO label. After a discussion of the nature of the AIDS issue, we focus on two aspects of IGO-NGO relations: various ways of framing the AIDS issue, which tend to empower and disempower different sets of organisational actors; and the conscious efforts by GPA to coordinate IGO and NGO activities. In conclusion, we identify some lessons and insights of broader applicability emanating from the AIDS case.

The nature of AIDS

Several characteristics of the AIDS issue are germane to understanding organisational responses. First, AIDS provides a graphic illustration of the degree of interdependence and mutual vulnerability among peoples. It involves so many different actors that it cannot be dealt with effectively by a single organisation—whether a national government, international organisation, multinational business corporation or nongovernmental organisation.⁵ 'AIDS cannot be stopped in any single country unless it is stopped in all countries.'⁶

Second, AIDS typifies an issue that spans global and community levels, in which penetrating societies is of utmost importance. It is an issue for which community and global connections are arguably more important than the national ones.⁷ Global cooperation and community-based treatment, care, and education are the indispensable components of an effective AIDS strategy.

Third, efforts to prevent or halt the spread of AIDS encroach upon the private and personal spheres that are normally beyond the purview of states. AIDS is a fatal infection that spreads through behaviour considered private or even taboo, such as premarital sexual relationships, extramarital sex, commercial sex, sex between men and needle sharing when injecting drugs. Though present, these

practices are seldom openly acknowledged in any society. Some governments even choose to deny them altogether.

Fourth, the long incubation period of HIV/AIDS, combined with the fact that young adults, the most productive and reproductive members of the population, are primary targets, makes this the first epidemic in medical history for which the infected have formed articulate and well-informed consumer lobbies. Impatient with bureaucratic responses, various coalitions of People with AIDS (PWAs) have demanded respect for those who are ill, and access to treatment for them. This has been said to represent a revolution in public health, a dramatic rupture with the past, with repercussions beyond the AIDS issue.⁸

These traits combine to challenge the orthodox state-centric view of international relations. States, either alone or collaborating in IGOS, cannot halt the spread of AIDS. Only through the interaction of states, IGOS and NGOs can care and education reach into societies. Only through interaction can a global policy that is responsive to the demands of those affected by the epidemic be formulated. In the next section, we analyse to what extent NGOs and IGOS have assumed prominent roles in the transnational processes triggered by the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Framing the issue

Problem definition, or framing, is a crucial aspect of agenda-setting. Problems do not exist 'out there', but are the result of subjective interpretations of certain perceived conditions and events. Most of what we generally recognise as international problems can be framed in a variety of ways. The importance of framing a problem has been recognised in different research traditions. Prospect theory, for example, asserts that the way people frame a problem determines in part how they see the consequences of choice.⁹ And cognitive scientists have shown that categorisation is not independent of who is doing the categorising. Categories do not exist in the world but have to do with the world as we interact with it.¹⁰ Framing, in short, is a highly political process. Goals of organisations and systems of organisations are subordinated to the goals of those who control the categorisation process.¹¹ Moreover, different ways of framing an issue mobilise and empower different types of actors at the expense of others.

AIDS as a medical problem

The most obvious and orthodox way of framing AIDS is in terms of medical science. Within the biomedical paradigm, the causes of ill health are located within the body, and AIDS is conceptualised in an elaborate scientific vocabulary.¹² This framing of HIV/AIDS mobilised and empowered actors traditionally engaged in health-related activities such as epidemiological surveillance, biomedical research and health care.

Associated with a medical understanding are a set of practices established as a social institution. The social institution public health entails standard operating procedures understandable to those well versed in its discourse. Thus, a search for the causative agent of AIDS constituted the reflexive response by medical

research institutes. As the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta received the first reports from doctors in California and New York about homosexual men developing a rare form of skin cancer and pneumonia, the research apparatus at CDC's disposal was immediately set in motion, reports were disseminated, articles submitted for publication and public hearings arranged. Also, CDC reported the new strange medical condition to the WHO epidemiological surveillance unit, which started to compile information and to disseminate it around the world. Long-established international cooperative structures in the field of health were activated.

As discovery was followed by a search for the cause, the number of actors grew. Quasi-governmental organisations were given resources to start research. For example, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Maryland as well as the Pasteur Institute in Paris became engaged. As results accumulated, yet other nongovernmental actors were involved in the form of publishers of medical journals and professional organisations for public health specialists. Furthermore, as possibilities for vaccines and drugs were explored, pharmaceutical companies saw potential profits and began to think about new products and markets.

Medical experts were also the first to bring AIDS to the international agenda in earnest. In August 1983 the Panamerican Health Organization (PAHO), in cooperation with the US NIH and CDC, convened a regional meeting of scientists and public health workers in Washington, DC to exchange information on the occurrence of AIDS. Two months later a similar meeting in Aarhus, Denmark focused on AIDS in Europe. It was co-organised by the Danish Cancer Society, WHO and the European Organization for Cooperation in Cancer Prevention Studies.

The First International Conference on AIDS was convened in Atlanta in April 1985 and may be considered the beginning of worldwide mobilisation of the scientific community. The Atlanta conference, organised by CDC and co-sponsored by the US Department of Health and WHO, was attended by scientists and health authorities from 50 countries. International AIDS conferences have since become annual—since 1994, biennial—events, furnishing opportunities for exchange of viewpoints between specialists and for raising public awareness. Although their topics and participants have gradually expanded, medical framing remains the predominant approach. The International AIDS Society, a voluntary association of scientific interest groups and a co-sponsor of the annual AIDS conferences, is a principal NGO within this frame.

However, a medical understanding of the pandemic is far from simple. Traditional medical solutions to epidemics—a drug that would cure the disease, a vaccine that would prevent infection—have remained beyond reach. In this respect, AIDS is a medical problem thus far without a medical solution. Moreover, any approach to preventing or controlling AIDS needs to be informed by the particularities of the epidemiological patterns and the routes of infection. In short, medical framing tends to hide other aspects of the pandemic.

Jonathan Mann, former executive director of GPA, coined the notion of three epidemics to highlight its multifaceted nature. The first epidemic is the silent and unnoticed infection by HIV that began spreading from continent to continent in

the 1970s. The global manifestations of the infection, the spread of AIDS cases, represents the second wave. The third epidemic concerns the social, economic, political and cultural reactions to, and consequences of, the first two epidemics. This includes social disruption as individuals, families, groups and societies are affected; the economic consequences of expensive health care and loss of income, families' losses of breadwinners and societies' losses of entire generations of workers; and the stigmatisation of and discrimination against those infected by the virus. The third epidemic, says Mann, is 'as central to the global AIDS challenge as the disease itself' and can be 'as destructive as the preceding ones'. It 'threatens increasingly to overshadow and overwhelm the epidemics of HIV and AIDS'.¹³

AIDS as a problem of human rights

The notion of a third epidemic implies several possible framings in addition to the medical one. Blame and stigmatisation represent one alternative conceptualisation, not only in the general public but also among policy-makers. AIDS is understood not in biomedical and scientific terms but in moral and sometimes even theological terms. The disease is viewed not primarily as the result of infection by a micro-organism but as a social, moral or spiritual affliction.¹⁴ This includes calls for quarantine and other exclusionary policies as a response to the actual mode of transmission and also to the felt need to establish a boundary between 'us' and 'them'. In the mid-1980s several countries, including the USA, passed legislation restricting the entry of HIV-infected individuals. Aided by the discovery of the AIDS virus in 1983 to 1984 and the subsequent development of diagnostic tests, policy-makers were often prodded into such action by religious and conservative organisations.

An antithetical framing is in terms of human rights. Discrimination and violations of the human rights and dignity of HIV-infected people then become key aspects, and refinement of legal instruments and international conventions become the preferred solution. The human rights conceptualisation to a certain extent stands in stark contrast to the medical framing. Surveillance of the epidemic invokes practices that may raise questions of human rights. These practices include involuntary testing of high-risk groups, such as prostitutes, prisoners, intravenous drug users and homosexuals; users of health services, such as pregnant women and patients with sexually transmitted diseases; migrants or travellers; and certain occupation groups, such as military and health personnel. Notifying health authorities of cases of AIDS, ostensibly only a technical public health measure, also raises the human rights issues of confidentiality and anonymity.

Homosexual men in the USA and Europe were the first known AIDS victims and also the first to organise a response. People with AIDS reacted to what they perceived as grave injustices, such as loss of employment and housing, occupational restrictions, for example in health care and food handling, or social ostracism. Organisation was facilitated because homosexual communities, especially in the USA, were already well organised as a result of the struggle for respect and non-discrimination dating back to the civil rights era of the late

1960s. AIDS mobilised these gay organisations and provided them with a target for their frustration. They were relatively well equipped with organisational resources, such as office space, committed and educated staff and, not least, established contacts with policy-makers within city, state and national authorities. On the one hand, this mobilisation spawned numerous AIDS service organisations (ASOs) engaged in providing basic health care and counselling for the sick. Around the world, ASOs mushroomed and became institutional vehicles of volunteer, community-based AIDS prevention and care efforts. On the other hand, public advocacy and activist organisations, such as Gay Men's Health Crisis in the USA, quickly rose to prominence. ACT-UP (the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) is a prominent activist organisation that stages direct action, including civil disobedience, to target institutions that impede AIDS research or discriminate against HIV-infected people. Starting as a local activist group in New York's Greenwich Village, ACT-UP now has chapters in several countries around the world.

It is noteworthy that the first intergovernmental body to address the epidemic was a human rights organisation. In 1983 the Council of Europe pointed to the human rights aspects of the epidemic in a couple of remarkable resolutions.¹⁵ The involvement of the Council of Europe at an early moment, when denial and dim recognition of the AIDS problem prevailed, may seem surprising. Human rights issues are traditionally given high priority on the organisation's agenda, but the various Council of Europe institutions have a conservative record. The council's action on a very sensitive issue can be attributed to the pre-existence of a specialised committee concerned with safe blood products and the precedent of a 1981 resolution on discrimination against homosexuals which, in turn, reflected a history of lobbying by homosexual activists.

Several international organisations, IGOS as well as NGOs, have established an elaborate set of practices and a discourse for dealing with human rights. However, the worlds of public health and human rights seldom meet. Yet human rights became a crucial element of GPA's global AIDS strategy. This reflected Jonathan Mann's growing consciousness of the human rights aspects of AIDS, developed in conversations with a handful of intellectuals. Not only did Mann accept that human rights of PWA/HIV should be respected because it was right, he also found a public health rationale for respecting them. If AIDS was a reason for discrimination, he argued, effective prevention campaigns would not reach the targets; the problem would be driven underground and allowed to fester undisturbed by public intervention.

GPA officials hosted consultations with human rights and AIDS-related NGOs in Geneva and New York in May 1988 and requested the British-based human rights NGO, Rights and Humanity, to prepare an internal briefing document on how to involve UN agencies in human rights aspects of AIDS. Attention to these aspects gradually gained momentum, as NGOs pressed for incorporation of human rights aspects of the AIDS pandemic in the annual international AIDS conferences, co-sponsored by WHO. An International Consultation on AIDS and Human Rights was convened in Geneva in July 1989 in collaboration with the UN Centre on Human Rights. Four dozen participants from a wide variety of professional fields and representing an array of international, regional and

national civic-based and public organisations exchanged ideas and concerns. Although instrumental in clarifying issues, this meeting also unveiled organisational constraints. Specifically, GPA and the UN Centre on Human rights represented divergent organisational cultures and working habits. Their relations remained strained, and little result was achieved in the further development of policies at the intersection of AIDS and human rights.

AIDS as a socioeconomic problem

Yet another framing defines the epidemic as a socioeconomic problem. AIDS was initially perceived to be a 'disease of affluence' confined to the Western industrialised countries, but it has become ever more evident that AIDS is a 'disease of poverty'. In a global perspective, AIDS becomes a North-South problem, epitomising the gap between developed and developing countries. Foreign aid then constitutes the time-honoured response.

WHO's active involvement with AIDS coincided with the realisation that the epidemic was spreading rapidly in the Third World. Support to developing countries in providing health for all has been a mainstay of WHO's work since the late 1970s. It is therefore natural that WHO's growing involvement brought the North-South aspects of the AIDS problem into focus. By the same token, development NGOs also became potential actors.

WHO GPA assumed a coordinating role in providing AIDS-related foreign aid to the Third World. For many donor countries, channelling financial resources through WHO offered a convenient way out of a political quandary. WHO Director-General Halfdan Mahler put it succinctly during an informal meeting on AIDS in connection with the 40th World Health Assembly in May 1987: 'A number of major bilateral donors have stated clearly that their bilateral efforts to combat AIDS have been constrained by political sensitivities, and inadequate knowledge, expertise, experience, and financial and human resources ... That is why [they] have decided to complement WHO's programme and centrally-funded activities.'¹⁶

One limitation in WHO's ability to fulfil its coordinating role in foreign assistance results from having governmental agencies as its national counterparts. In the Third World, health ministries are notoriously weak and inefficient. GPA therefore first turned to UNDP to improve its access in developing countries, forming the 'WHO-UNDP Alliance to Combat AIDS' in March 1988. The purpose was to take advantage of UNDP's socioeconomic expertise and presence in most Third World countries. UNDP resident representatives were authorised to coordinate all external assistance to national AIDS programmes at the country level. The idea of combining the strengths of WHO and UNDP, while sound in theory, worked less well in practice. The envisaged collaboration was encumbered by duplication and turf battles.

In short, socioeconomic framing became predominant with WHO's involvement. At the same time, the very definition of AIDS as a North-South issue contributed to a gradual erosion of WHO's role as lead agency because donor countries and development IGOs and NGOs came to question WHO's competence. In the absence of medical solutions, development had to focus on education and

behaviour change. The burden of design then passes from medical to social science. WHO's traditional partners in member states and among NGOs have primarily medical expertise. Although the number of NGOs in official relations with WHO is impressive, very few deal with development and hardly any deal with health service and education in rural settings.

As this brief account shows, there exists a confounding variety of framings of, and proposed solutions to, the AIDS problem—all with their concomitant sets of interested organisational actors. In the following section, we trace the efforts by WHO GPA to forge links with NGOs from various sectors in hammering out a global AIDS policy.

Forging IGO-NGO links

After the initiation of GPA, WHO's role as lead agency in AIDS-related international cooperation was endorsed by states and by a host of intergovernmental organisations. WHO's interest in NGOs increased as the implications of its ambitious Global Strategy for Health for All by the Year 2000 took hold.¹⁷ That strategy represented a redirection of WHO towards a broader focus on health care and its role in development; and it required a partnership among governments, WHO and NGOs. Thus, when WHO developed its responses to HIV/AIDS, it acquired the potential to become a focal point for transnational NGO activity.

From the beginning of his tenure as head of GPA, Jonathan Mann demonstrated an enthusiastic, if initially lonely, conviction that cooperation with NGOs would prove to be essential. He and newly-recruited colleagues built up contacts and insights into the NGO world, while an increasing number of NGO representatives sought information and cooperation from GPA.

By the end of 1987, GPA had recruited Robert Grose, an experienced hand with NGO relations who came from the Overseas Development Administration of the United Kingdom. Grose's task included not merely direct contact with NGOs but the creation of an organised structure for that line of contacts. By that time, it had become obvious that a few NGOs were taking an interest in and occasionally carrying out loud and dramatic demonstrations at the international AIDS conferences that GPA was co-sponsoring. Other NGOs were becoming involved in the growing number of National AIDS Programs (NAPs) that GPA promoted.

However, most GPA staff had little experience in working with NGOs outside the public health and medical sectors; no consensus existed within GPA concerning the degree of influence that NGOs should be given in GPA policy and programme discussions. One group wanted NGOs to help GPA with the execution of programmes and with information gathering. NGOs, it was argued, 'do not possess an overall appreciation of the AIDS pandemic and all its manifestations and, moreover, usually represent a specific interest group and hence possess only a specific or limited orientation toward the dilemma as a whole'.¹⁸ Another group, including Mann and Grose, wanted to include ASOs and AIDS-related NGOs in all aspects of the policy process. They proposed and started to build 'a small informal working group composed of those persons and organizations with whom we feel comfortable, to strategize and map out a framework'.¹⁹

The informal GPA-centred network included individuals who were nodes in regional networks and who multiplied discussions. Among them were key Red Cross officials in Geneva, a creative and bold homosexual man responsible for the AIDS activities of the Norwegian Red Cross and a Canadian physician and human rights activist plugged into the North American ASOS. On the whole, the picture began to emerge of a fairly small group of people in regular contact with each other.

Many ASOS pressed for official acknowledgement of their legitimacy and competence and for representation on AIDS-related bodies. In addition, they sought material support. Both as a matter of policy and of legal capacity, IGOS have been cautious in directly supporting NGOs. GPA sought an indirect route via national governments and the GPA-sponsored National AIDS Programs. In 1991 GPA officially recommended that NAPS commit at least 15% of the funds channelled through WHO to support NGO AIDS activities. In reality, however, collaboration between national programmes and NGOs remained limited, and resource flows to NGOs through the NAPS were small.²⁰ GPA also initiated a Partnership Program to distribute 'seed' grants directly to NGOs for specific projects. To qualify, projects had to be carried out jointly by transnational and local NGOs and required the approval of both national governments and national programmes.

An international NGO forum

Several leading AIDS activists lobbied GPA, requesting assistance in setting up an umbrella organisation to group the new ASOS and other NGOs. Ken Morrison of the Canadian AIDS Society recalls the early history:

Early in 1988, the Canadian AIDS Society (CAS) wrote to WHO to request assistance in setting up an international forum. This was followed by more and more concrete proposals from CAS. Richard Rector, wandering American, was working hard in and out of WHO lobbying for such a forum. In Brazil, Walter Almeida, behind his computer, his telephone and fax machine, churned out proposals. The Canadian Council for International Co-operation, an umbrella organization of international development agencies, also put together a proposal for an international AIDS project.²¹

Grose and Mann encouraged these plans. Such a structure would explicitly recognise the role of NGOs, while at the same time responding to demands from within the WHO structure and elsewhere for more bureaucratic tidiness. After several informal consultations between GPA officials and a small group of NGO representatives, the first international meeting of ASOS was held in Vienna in late February 1989. Another ASO conference took place in Montreal in June the same year, just before the Fifth International AIDS Conference. Representatives of more than 100 AIDS-related NGOs participated. A task force of representatives from nine regions was established to develop the organisational structure and a programme of action for a proposed International Council of ASOS (ICASO).

Ratification was to take place at the Second International AIDS NGO Confer-

ence, set to coincide with the Sixth International AIDS Conference in San Francisco in 1990. As a result of a widespread boycott of the San Francisco conference because of US legislation restricting entry of HIV-infected travellers, the NGO conference was moved to Paris and convened in early November 1990. Ratification of ICASO proved to be controversial, since proponents of the new umbrella organisation had failed to involve counterparts at the local and regional level.

Africans took the lead in opposing ICASO. During the first African caucus session, three-fourths of the participants argued that they had never heard of ICASO. The sole African member of the ICASO planning committee claimed she had never been asked to contribute during the drafting process. Attitudes among the participants from other regions were mixed. Many felt that the structure of ICASO was being forced on them without prior consultation. The conference ended with the ICASO ratification left in suspense. In the end, the conferees agreed that the organisational development process was to go forward but opted for a more decentralised and regionalised structure, which was confirmed in 1991.

Formal representation of NGOs became an issue in connection with the GPA Global Management Committee (GMC), the highest policy-making body of GPA. Because almost all GPA funding derives from voluntary contributions by governments, their representatives sought an appropriate supervisory device. GMC consists of representatives of all governments making unearmarked contributions to the GPA budget. Other members represent WHO regions and the six IGOs that have cooperated most intensely with GPA. NGOs were at first limited to observer status at GMC meetings but, as early as January 1988, some NGOs requested representation in GMC. GMC anticipated success in the plans to create an umbrella organisation, and accepted one NGO representative as a full member. With the controversial nature of ICASO, it has become difficult to represent the varied perspectives and interests of NGOs, and the presence of a full NGO member has been postponed while a growing number of NGOs participate as observers.

Informal networking

Annual international AIDS conferences have been forums for informal networking. The earliest NGO meetings, as we have seen, were held in conjunction with these larger conferences. Since then, they have provided ample opportunities for contact among various NGOs and the establishment of *ad hoc* coalitions and networks.

For several years, non-medical issues played a subordinate role in official conference programmes. The 1992 conference in Amsterdam, by contrast, reflected a commitment by the organisers to bring social issues into a new balance with biomedical science and public health. The planners also made a special effort to involve People with AIDS and local organisations from the Third World. The conference programme reflected an integrated approach, and NGOs played an unprecedented role in the planning as well as the proceedings. A series of workshops were specifically aimed at empowering small organisations to grow and connect to other similar organisations. Skills such as producing

newsletters, communicating with authorities and organising workshops were taught; and HIV-net, a computerised bulletin board connecting several organisations, was set up. Subsequent conferences have not matched the precedent set by Amsterdam concerning NGO involvement.

The Amsterdam conference included the prominent presence of a new organisation, Global AIDS Policy Coalition (GAPC), which was started by Mann from his new post at Harvard University, where he went after leaving WHO. It has assembled outstanding researchers, policy analysts, practitioners and community workers from around the world. A special area of interest is the nexus of AIDS, health and human rights issues. From his Harvard position and as head of GAPC, Mann has been able to stay at the forefront of the global policy process, despite his abrupt exit from WHO after a dispute with the director-general.

NGOs and AIDS-related foreign assistance

One particular area where NGOs have played an operational role, alone, or in collaboration with IGOs, is AIDS-related foreign assistance. From the outset, most multilateral aid was channelled through GPA. From 1987 to 1990, donors increased their funding annually, so that GPA's financial resources increased from \$29.8 million in 1987 to \$79.3 million in 1990.²²

NGOs had a comparative advantage in the multilateral aid effort. Efficient AIDS programmes demanded sustained community commitment. In order to play a role in such programmes, GPA needed to establish credibility and trust among organisations with documented results in health service delivery and sex education. Without such contacts, little rationalisation could exist for using GPA for channelling resources from major donors. Naturally, GPA staff were aware of how donors like the US Agency for International Development (US AID) and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) were enthusiastic about NGOs in general.

In November 1989 the bilateral donors and UN agencies represented on the GPA Global Management Committee decided to commission an external review of GPA. Although it conformed to WHO's usual practice, there were other signs of dissatisfaction with the way GPA performed its coordinating role. By 1990 there was a shift towards bilateral funding. Moreover, in 1991 for the first time contributions to GPA declined at the same time as total contributions (bilateral and multilateral) for AIDS prevention and care in the Third World decreased.²³

The review criticised the deficient coordination among UN agencies, citing 'duplication of effort and territorial rivalries'.²⁴ In addition, the review pointed to problems in GPA's relations with NGOs. While praising the farsightedness of recognising the importance of NGOs in early policy documents, the review also stated that 'a number of NGOs felt that GPA was attempting to mediate and control their initiatives'.²⁵ Problems of NGO coordination were noted at the national level as well:

During visits to countries, the ERC [External Review Committee] noted that NGOs (where they exist) receive few funds through NAPS [National AIDS Programs], and that collaboration appears to be a low priority. Donors have attempted to channel

funds directly to NGOs through their own institutional mechanisms. In addition, some have begun to explore new ways of channeling technical and financial assistance to NGOs: needs are being assessed and a range of possible measures will be explored.²⁶

The review recommended that a new structure for coordination be formed at the global level, and called for stronger interagency coordination at country level, with special emphasis on NGO participation.²⁷ Succeeding designs for new coordination bodies were drafted by various *ad hoc* committees, only to be rejected. At the GMC meeting in November 1992, an informal working group managed to produce a proposal that was adopted unanimously. The proposal called for a GMC Task Force consisting of three representatives each from recipient governments, donor governments, the UN family and NGOs.

The task force idea originated from Nils-Arne Kastberg, a member of the Swedish mission in Geneva who had not previously dealt with cooperation on AIDS. Primarily a development expert, he had prior experience in UN coordination issues, had participated in the Nordic UN Project to reevaluate development efforts, and had taken an active part in the reorganisation of UN disaster relief. Kastberg was appointed chairperson of the task force and came to play a prominent role in informal interagency consultations that eventually resulted in a joint and co-sponsored UN programme on HIV/AIDS, endorsed by ECOSOC in July 1994.

While this new programme primarily concerns coordination within the UN family, it envisages NGO participation in a programme coordinating board and in the secretariat. Whereas the original plan for a joint and co-sponsored program called for collaboration with 'nongovernmental organizations, community-based organizations and groups of people living with HIV and AIDS',²⁸ this to date has received scant attention in the interagency bargaining process. Confronted with a *fait accompli*, NGOs have generally been wary of the new coordination scheme.

In sum, AIDS has raised several questions concerning IGO-NGO relations but provided few answers. For all the efforts at collaboration, a persistent element of mutual mistrust can be discerned. NGOs have feared that GPA wants control rather than coordination, and have balked at a too close identification with IGOs. At the same time, GPA has had to struggle with the confounding variety of NGOs, not all of which are seen as responsible partners. NGOs and GPA have remained 'reluctant partners'.²⁹

Lessons and conclusions

Several lessons of broader applicability can be derived from the experience of IGO-NGO links in this specialised yet diffuse and elusive issue. In keeping with our interorganisational approach, we shall concentrate on five interrelated aspects: the problems of NGO representation and representativeness; the advantages and disadvantages of formal versus informal coordination; the costs of network building; the varying degrees of organisation among interested actors; and the kind of expertise needed in network building.

Representation

Problems of representation are inescapable facts of international coordination. IGOs face perennial discussions of representation. The dividing line typically separates the principle of one state, one vote and representation qualified by some special attribute of the state considered essential for the implementation of the organisation's task. In the case of the task force, for instance, donor countries agreed that their three members would represent the countries of the European Community (now Union); the countries of Scandinavia and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA); and North America, Japan and Australia. This division was obviously based on contributions to AIDS-related assistance.

NGO representation presents special difficulties. According to the GMC decision, the selection of three NGO representatives for the task force was to be made by 'appropriate NGO coordinating bodies'.³⁰ In the absence of an official, commonly accepted NGO forum, this deliberately vague formulation left open the selection procedure. The actual choice of the Amsterdam-based AIDS Coordination Group, the Senegal-based ENDA-Tiers Monde and the Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS was made through an informal consultation process involving established NGO networks. As network theory would predict, these selections depended on trusted persons rather than organisations as such. From the Amsterdam group, Maria de Bruyn had a central role in European development-orientated networks. From ENDA-Tiers Monde, El Hadj As Sy was the pivotal person linking African ASOs, although his organisation, founded in 1972 with support from the UN Environment Program (UNEP), had little claim to be a key actor in the AIDS field.

It is still unclear how a few organisations might represent the heterogeneous NGO community—in the task force or in any other contemplated coordination body. Whereas the task force symbolises official recognition of NGO access to decision-making and coordination, difficult questions concerning constituency and representation remain.³¹ Representation problems, in short, arise in any formalisation of IGO-NGO links, and informal solutions are as valid as more formalistic procedures to elect participants.

Formal versus informal coordination

The case of AIDS illustrates the common tendency to search for formal mechanisms whenever a need for international coordination is perceived. Yet there are indications that informal network-like arrangements have certain advantages when it comes to complex coordination tasks. For example, Ernst Haas recommends that international organisations 'resist an overt reordering and centralization of authority', 'minimize hierarchies and regulations' and 'minimize the importance of the boundary between the organization and its environment'.³² Proceeding from a study of the coordination of regional transport in the San Francisco Bay area, Donald Chisholm arrives at similar conclusions: 'While I do not quarrel with the contention that interdependence requires coordination, I strongly dispute the reflexive assumption that coordination is inexorably tied to

centralized arrangements such as comprehensive plans and consolidated agencies'.³³

Formalisation raises a host of problems, one of which is representation, as discussed above. Formal coordination structures inevitably limit the number of organisations represented, whereas informal coordination among many independent, partly overlapping organisations provides more points of access to the decision-making process.³⁴ Another problem is that formalisation normally introduces an element of hierarchy. And even hints of centralisation tend to invite controversy. To wit, everyone wants coordination but no one wants to be coordinated.

In the case of AIDS, the designation of WHO as the lead agency injected elements of hierarchy and centralisation from the outset. The degree of conflict and the variety of agencies concerned with AIDS were probably underestimated, but they became obvious in the process. The joint and cosponsored UN programme differs in that it aims to create a new structure between rather than above existing agencies. Explicitly seeking to avoid verticalisation, the UN programme promotes a multisectoral approach. Furthermore, one of the lessons learned from developing a joint and co-sponsored UN programme pertained to the participating organisations' need to preserve their identities, which are often endangered by hierarchical coordination designs.

Informal coordination structures also tend to be more flexible and adaptable than formal ones. Roles and definitions of tasks are determined not by a single authority but by the participating agencies themselves. Roles can be continuously redefined and specific tasks renegotiated. Moreover, information tends to flow more freely through informal structures than through formal channels, which are often ineffective when information is sensitive or politically charged. In effect, the informal yet crucial role played by the *ad hoc* task force, with representatives of IGOs and NGOs as well as donor governments, is an example of the advantages of informal coordination. The task force served as a clearing-house for exchange of information and views among key actors in the institutional bargaining process. It would hardly have been able to transmit information to and from constituencies and forward comments and views to the involved agencies so freely had it been part of a formal, hierarchical coordination structure.

In international cooperation generally, and concerning AIDS in particular, the lack of trust among governments and between IGOs and NGOs is an irritant. One important advantage of informal over formal organisation is that it provides an opportunity for mutual mistrust gradually to be broken down and replaced by confidence.

Of course, informal organisation should not be idealised. There are disadvantages associated with informal channels based on personal relationships. They are extremely vulnerable to high rates of turnover among personnel, especially when they result in departures from the interorganisational system instead of movements within the system.³⁵ This is especially relevant in connection with AIDS, where high staff turnover and burnout occur at the managerial level of national AIDS programmes, and where people with HIV/AIDS—who are more susceptible than others to exhaustion, sickness and death—are often key links in

national and international networks.³⁶ Thus, informal organisation is not a substitute for, but rather an important complement to, formal organisation.

Costs of network building

There is a variety of costs associated with network building. First, transaction costs, to borrow a term from economists, can be formidable for small and especially for poor NGOs. Face-to-face contacts constitute the foundation of transnational networks, which usually require generous travel funds. In the field of AIDS, this represents a significant obstacle to universal representation at international gatherings, since the participation of Third World NGO representatives has overwhelmingly depended on funding from industrialised countries. Financial dependencies stay in the way of closer IGO-NGO links in other issue areas as well.

In addition to these tangible costs, there are other, less material but equally significant ones. For many NGOs, opposing and criticising government policies have been traditional. To collaborate with governments and IGO in networks and to formulate and implement joint programmes may imply a profound change in identity with concomitant costs: 'Their *autonomy* is challenged: by engaging in coordinated programmes, NGOs surrender a certain degree of autonomy over their own actions and the external factors that might affect them. Finally, their *cohesion* is weakened, as new tensions emerge within the NGO.'³⁷

It is obvious that anticipation of these kinds of costs contributed to the reluctance among NGOs for full-fledged cooperation with WHO's AIDS strategy.

Finally, individual leadership—a crucial ingredient in effective transnational networks—entails notable costs. The example of Jonathan Mann is illustrative. During his years as director of GPA, Mann provided vital leadership. He was an active network builder; his background in public health made him well equipped to integrate medical professionals and other AIDS activists; he made important contributions to the formulation of the goals of global AIDS cooperation; and in his travels around the world, he was in constant interaction with the work. In the process, he apparently failed in the internal functions pertaining to his constituent organisation, WHO; in 1990 he was replaced by a long-standing WHO official. As this and other examples indicate, successful leadership in a transnational network may endanger the leader's position within his or her home organisation, whether governmental, intergovernmental or nongovernmental. Leadership implies a readiness to depart from narrow organisational roles and to base initiatives on a conception of collective goals, however controversial.

Degree of organisation

One factor working against the creation of a tightly knit AIDS network is the varying degree of organisation among relevant actors. Among affected groups, homosexual men are incomparably the best organised. In several Western countries, they constitute influential pressure groups; they have been able to mobilise and articulate political demands; and they have developed well-functioning international networks. As the AIDS epidemic developed across the globe,

it became apparent that this was not a disease restricted to the gay community. In fact, three-quarters of all adults with HIV in the world today have been infected through heterosexual transmission. Yet homosexual men remain key actors in transnational networks. Other affected groups—such as prostitutes, intravenous drug users, haemophiliacs, women or children—have few or no organisations to look after their interests; they thus play a peripheral role in transnational cooperation.

There are great geographical variations as well. The degree of organisation in the Third World and Eastern Europe is low compared with North America and Western Europe. The networking that goes on tends to link English-speaking representatives of industrialised countries. Even when it comes to addressing AIDS problems in the Third World, some of the most influential organisations are based in the industrialised world, such as the UK NGO AIDS Consortium for the Third World in London and the National Council for International Health in Washington. Lack of funding is a major obstacle to better organisation in the Third World. In Eastern Europe, in addition, there is a lack of experience of working in grassroots organisations and a heritage of distrust. After several decades of compulsory membership in voluntary organisations, volunteerism has a negative connotation.

Expertise

The popular notion that epistemic communities—knowledge-based networks of experts—play a key role in international policy coordination finds little support in our study of AIDS. Close informal relationships among individuals representing organisations appeared at crucial junctures in every instance of cooperation we found. However, they did not usually fit neatly with the notion of epistemic communities. Rather, the networks were looser in both intention and composition.

Our study suggests that international cooperation in a specialised issue area requires not only know-how but also 'know-who'. Expert knowledge of an issue such as AIDS needs to be combined with knowledge of the relevant organisational and individual actors who might contribute to a solution to the problem: who are they? Under what restraints do they work? How can they be accessed? This is precisely the kind of knowledge that is necessary for successfully building networks.

Among AIDS activists there has often been insufficient understanding of the workings and vagaries of international organisations, especially of the UN system. Conversely, the most successful network builders have developed expertise about organisational actors. It is also noteworthy that a person with absolutely no AIDS expertise but with solid knowledge of the UN system and other actors on the North–South arena assumed a central position in recent efforts at coordinating assistance to the Third World.

In sum, an interorganisational perspective on IGO–NGO links in the global response to AIDS reveals possibilities as well as limitations. NGOs are necessary partners, since they represent the victims of the epidemic, can span the local and global levels, and are better equipped than government authorities to deal with

the sensitive, private issues involved in AIDS prevention. NGO representatives also have assumed central positions in informal transnational networks. Yet mutual mistrust, turf battles and the tendency to search for formal coordination mechanisms have stood in the way of closer links and greater efficiency in combating AIDS.

Notes

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- ² Jonathan Mann as quoted in Panos Institute, *AIDS in the Third World*, London: Panos Institute, 1988, p 94.
- ³ The text of the document can be found, eg in WHO/GPA, *Global Programme on AIDS: Progress Report Number 4*, WHO/GPA/EN/88.3, Geneva, October 1988, pp 87–88.
- ⁴ Leon Gordenker, Roger A Coate, Christer Jönsson & Peter Söderholm, *International Cooperation in Response to AIDS*, London: Pinter Publishers, 1995.
- ⁵ Such issues have been variously labelled 'global indivisibilities', 'interdependence issues', or 'international physical externalities'. See respectively, James A Caporaso, 'International Relations theory and multilateralism: the search for foundations', *International Organization*, 46, 1992, p 599; James N Rosenau, *Turbulence in World Politics*, London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990, p 106; Mark W Zacher, 'The decaying pillars of the Westphalian temple: implications for international order and governance', in James N Rosenau & Ernst-Otto Czempiel (eds), *Governance without Government: Order and Change in World Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp 76–80.
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- ¹² Ken Plummer, 'Organizing AIDS', in Peter Aggleton & Hilary Homans (eds), *Social Aspects of AIDS*, London, The Falmer Press, 1988, p 23.
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- ¹⁵ Council of Europe, *R(83)8 and Resolution 812:1983*, Strasbourg, 1983.
- ¹⁶ Halfdan Mahler quoted in WHO, *Report of the External Review of the World Health Organization Global Programme on AIDS*, GPA/GMC(8)/92.4, Geneva, 1992, p 4.
- ¹⁷ The strategy was set out in World Health Assembly resolution WHA 34.36, 1981. See also Leon Gordenker, 'The World Health Organization: sectoral leader or occasional benefactor?', in Roger A Coate (ed), *US Policy and the Future of the United Nations*, New York: The Twentieth Century Fund Press, 1994, pp 171–172.
- ¹⁸ WHO/GPA, Memorandum from Terry Mooney to Jonathan Mann, 7 March 1988.
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- ²¹ *Opportunities for Solidarity*, final report of the Montreal Meeting of NGOs involved in community AIDS service, Montreal 2–4 June 1989, p 6.
- ²² WHO, *1991 Progress Report: Global Program on AIDS*, Geneva: WHO, 1992, Annex 8.
- ²³ Mann et al, *AIDS in the World*, pp 511–12, 519.
- ²⁴ WHO, *External Review*, p 39.
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- ²⁷ Ibid, pp 42–43, 47.
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- ²⁹ Compare John Farrington & Anthony Bebbington, *Reluctant Partners: Non-Governmental Organizations, the State and Sustainable Agricultural Development*, London: Routledge, 1993, p 26.
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- ³⁷ Farrington & Bebbington, *Reluctant Partners*, p 49.

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VOLUME 35

NUMBER 2

OCTOBER 1994

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PUBLISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY,
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
To order send cheque or money order NZ\$13.00, A\$17.50 or US\$17.50
to PACIFIC VIEWPOINT, Information and Publications,
Victoria University, PO Box 600, Wellington, New Zealand

Engendering world conferences: the international women's movement and the United Nations

MARTHA ALTER CHEN

The Fourth World Conference on Women will have been held in Beijing in September 1995. Twenty years earlier, the First World Conference on Women, which launched the UN Decade for Women, was held in Mexico City. Two other world conferences for women marked the midpoint and end of the decade: Copenhagen in 1980 and Nairobi in 1985.¹ These UN world conferences for women have served to galvanise the international women's movement,² to increase the visibility of women and to show that women matter to world development.³

As the international women's movement has grown and matured, other world conferences have attracted its attention and energy. This is so because women recognise the importance of voicing women's perspectives, not only in special conferences for women but also at all conferences, and because these conferences deal with issues that are of interest and concern to women. The ability of the movement to influence these world conferences has increased steadily over time.

UN world conferences also have attracted the attention of such other NGO-led movements as the human rights and environmental groups. When people now speak about a world conference, they usually mean two separate but related conferences—the official UN conference and the NGO forum—held simultaneously or sequentially in the same city. The official conference is the place where government delegations meet to negotiate official policies and documents. The NGO forum is the place where NGOs meet, exchange experiences and develop new strategies.⁴

This essay presents a brief history of how the NGO-led international women's movement has shaped the UN Decade for Women, the World Conferences for Women, and other UN conferences. In so doing, it examines how the types of NGOs interact with the UN, how the relationships between the UN and NGOs have changed over time, and what strategies have proved effective in putting women's concerns on a variety of international agendas.

This is partly the story of women's efforts to influence world conferences and partly an analysis of the methods and strategies women developed in the process. The essay starts with a brief background and history of the UN Decade for Women. It then describes how women were able to shape the policy debates at three recent UN conferences—the Rio conference on environment, the Vienna conference on human rights and the Cairo conference on population. It ends on an uncertain note since many of the gains made by the movement in Rio, Vienna

and Cairo have been challenged during the preparatory process leading towards the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing.⁵

Making women visible: the UN decade for women

Over the first 30 years of its existence,⁶ the United Nations made steady progress on women's rights within a framework laid out in its Charter of equality between men and women and nondiscrimination on the basis of gender.⁷ In those early years, according to the UN accreditation rules at that time, the only women's NGOs that had consultative status with the UN were those that were both international and representative: for example, the Associated Country Women of the World, the International Alliance of Women, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, World Young Women's Christian Association and Zonta International. Only a few were headquartered outside Europe or North America.⁸

Since 1975 the UN perspective on women has changed dramatically. The movement itself has also changed dramatically over the past 20 years. The number and variety of NGOs and NGO networks have increased exponentially, and the leadership of the movement has shifted perceptibly from women in the North to women in the South. Moreover, the women's movement has accumulated significant experience and expertise and coalesced in a remarkable way to influence the global policy agenda.

According to the oral history of the UN family, the idea of and initial demand for an International Women's Year came from an international women's organisation in consultative status with the UN: in the Women's International Democratic Federation. The idea was taken up by two official women representatives to the UN Commission on the Status of Women.⁹ In 1972 the commission recommended to the General Assembly that 1975 be declared International Women's Year; it became the first of the UN theme years for which extensive preparations were undertaken at all levels.

Thus the International Women's Year is a prime example of an NGO initiative taken up by the UN system, one that exceeded all expectations. It developed into a UN Decade for Women which, in turn, generated 'a process with dimensions and repercussions such as the initiators had hardly dared to dream of'.¹⁰ The International Women's Year also marked the beginning of a new 'women's era' in the UN and the emergence of a global women's movement.

The major event of the year was the First World Conference on Women in Mexico City. Over 6000 women participated in the NGO forum in Mexico City, more nonofficial participants than at any previous UN world conference. Delegations from 133 member states took part in the official conference. They adopted a World Plan of Action, which 'was the first such document the world had seen to concentrate specifically on problems and concerns of women, covering all possible aspects of their lives from food, health and education to family planning and political participation'.¹¹ However, its comprehensiveness and its lack of an underlying causal explanation of women's status led some feminist critics to refer to the plan as a 'shopping list' of issues relating to women.¹² In December

that year, the General Assembly approved the recommendations of the Mexico City conference and declared 1976–1985 to be the UN Decade for Women.

In 1980 a second World Conference on Women was organised in Copenhagen to mark the midpoint of the decade and to assess how much the targets set in the World Plan of Action had been attained. At the official conference in Copenhagen, more so than at Mexico City, many wider political issues such as Zionism, apartheid and the new economic order were used to deflect attention from the World Plan of Action and the whole issue of women's equality. However, the official conference adopted a platform of action for the second half of the decade that emphasised employment, health, and education for women. Meanwhile, the 7000 people, mainly women, who had gathered at the NGO forum were able to communicate and find common ground, despite differences in political, ideological and cultural backgrounds. In the end, the Copenhagen conference covered a wider range of development issues and perspectives than were covered in Mexico City, including critiques of past approaches to women in development and of the new economic order's impact on women.

The Third World Conference on Women was held in Nairobi in 1985 to mark the end of the decade. The numbers for both the official conference and the NGO forum reached a record high. The number of delegates to the official conference was about one-third more than in Mexico City and Copenhagen—over 2000 delegates from 157 countries, and several hundred representatives of NGOs in consultative status to the United Nations.¹³ More significant still, over 14 000 women from some 150 countries attended the NGO forum. The final document of the Nairobi Conference, called 'Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women', provided an analytical framework as well as prescriptive measures to address the obstacles to the advancement of women. After long and strenuous negotiations during the conference, the 'Forward Looking Strategies' were adopted unanimously.¹⁴

By far the most conspicuous change over the decade was the exponential increase in the number and types of women's NGOs in every country of the world, and the complex of alliances, networks and coalitions set up to unite them. While thousands of women had participated in the three conferences, 'tens of thousands were mobilised by the process in countries around the world'.¹⁵ These new groups represented every hue in the ideological rainbow: secular, religious, radical, conservative, grassroots and elite. They were engaged in delivering welfare or development services to women, organising women for change, researching women's lives and work, advocating change for women and more.¹⁶ They were local, national, regional and international.

These groups represent a new breed of NGOs quite distinct from the established international women's NGOs that have long had consultative status with the UN. This new breed brought energy, vitality and creativity to the international women's movement as well as important links with local organisations and networks. Their goals were to bring women together to share information, resources and strategies, and to create alternative spaces for them at the local, national and global levels.¹⁷ By opting to remain within the framework of the UN, the older established women's organisations were soon outnumbered and overwhelmed by this new breed. However, the older established organisations

not only spearheaded the campaigns for the International Women's Year but also coordinated the organisation of the NGO forum at the three women's conferences during the decade.

At the international level, the new breed of NGOs manifested itself primarily as networks. A notable example is Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN): a network of scholars and activists in the South, which was established shortly before the Nairobi conference and has consistently articulated alternative development strategies. With the emergence of DAWN and other significant networks of women from the South, the leadership of the international women's movement shifted perceptibly—although not entirely—from North to South.

To maintain the emerging international networks of newer NGOs, a few more formal organisations have been formed. One of the first was the International Women's Tribune Center, which grew out of the NGO forum in Mexico City. Its location next to UN headquarters facilitates networking among grassroots women's organisations and between these organisations and the United Nations. The visions and aims of DAWN and other Third World NGOs have given impetus to the women's movement to set its own goals and aspirations.¹⁸ The skills and contacts of the International Women's Tribune Center (and other networking NGOs) also have given practical skills and knowledge to the women's movement.

Another result of the decade's national and international meetings—and of the thousands of smaller local meetings, seminars, studies and projects that sprang up around the world—was that women around the world not only knew each other better but were also better understood and more widely listened to.¹⁹ Women and development issues could no longer be overlooked by the United Nations or its member nations.

However, much of the Decade for Women was spent in addressing differences in approaches to feminism at the theoretical or ideological levels and differences between women from different social, cultural, historical and geographic locations at the practical level. By the end of the decade, the international women's movement had only begun to address these differences; the hierarchies of class, race and dependency that condition women's lives continued to divide them. Over the past decade, in contrast, the international women's movement has been able to forge remarkable consensus and coalitions around specific issues that affect women, namely environment, human rights and population.

Putting women on the agenda in Rio, Vienna and Cairo

The issues of concern to women, as well as their contributions and problems, came to the forefront in several conferences other than those specifically for women.²⁰ However, several other world conferences in the late 1970s 'failed totally to realize that there might be an important women's dimension to these topics, and that its recognition might enhance possibilities of solving some of the problems'.²¹

From their experience at these various world conferences, the international women's movement had learned several important lessons. The first was that women's voices have little chance of being heard at UN world conferences

without deliberate and concerted efforts. When there have been a few active women on the delegations, in the UN secretariat responsible for the conference, or in NGOs concerned with the substantive issue, they have generally taken the initiative. When sufficiently well-versed in UN procedures, the women have been able to get draft resolutions and text in support of women through all the preparatory stages and the conferences themselves.²²

The second lesson was that the best time to influence a world conference is during the preparatory process. Many groups and individuals went to the parallel NGO forum at the various women's conferences with the hope of being able to influence the resolutions of the intergovernmental conference. On the spot, however, this was very difficult. NGOs have to master lobbying techniques, understand UN conference procedures clearly and lobby effectively during the preparatory process to make an impact on the official debates. This was a bitter lesson.

The third lesson was that the international women's movement needed to build consensus and coalitions to bridge the ideological and material differences between women. To do so internationally, they first had to do so at the local, national and regional levels.

Coming out of the decade, the international women's movement was determined to build on these lessons and to put women on the agenda of all world conferences, not just of special conferences for women. The experiences shared, the networks and coalitions strengthened and the lessons learned during the 1970s and 1980s all had important consequences for the decade that followed. The international women's movement entered the 1990s with more political vision, know-how and strategies and with a wider political base than ever before.

Rio: women, environment and sustainable development

The UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio in 1992 is seen as a turning point for NGOs and as an example of strengthening partnerships between governments, the United Nations and NGOs. The number of NGO representatives who attended the official conference as well as the number of people who attended the NGO forum were the largest ever.²³ Because the UNCED planners adopted an inclusive accreditation process, over 1400 NGOs attended the official conference.²⁴ Thousands more were informally linked to the UNCED process through the preparatory meetings and the many regional meetings leading up to Rio: a record 30 000 people from 171 countries attended the Global Forum.²⁵ Increased access to NGOs proved to be a two-way street, giving NGOs information and access to policy-makers, and giving policy-makers expert advice from the diverse NGO community.²⁶

For the international women's movement whose member NGOs had already turned out in record numbers in Nairobi, Rio marked a different type of turning point. They effectively put women's issues and concerns on the official global agenda; they established 'that women's issues are part of global agendas and must be incorporated there, rather than addressed separately',²⁷ and they first worked closely with another social movement, in this case, the environmental movement.²⁸

Women's Congress. To build a consensus of women's perspectives and to prepare women to participate equally at Rio, the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), a US-based group guided by an International Policy Action Committee, organised a World Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet in late 1991. The congress was attended by 1500 women from 83 countries, and included women from UN agencies, governments, and organisations concerned with environment and development, religious organisations, grassroots groups, universities, foundations and the news media. It was the largest ever unofficial conference convened to prepare for and influence a UN world conference.²⁹

Former US Congresswoman Bella Abzug and other WEDO members had attended the Mexico, Copenhagen and Nairobi conferences and the PrepComs leading up to Rio. They had learned what it would take 'to bring women's perspectives into the proceedings and to claim equal representation of women in the whole UNCED process, as well as in national delegations attending the Rio Conference'.³⁰ And they were determined to make both happen.

To organise the Women's World Congress on a Healthy Planet, WEDO formed a steering committee of 10 women representing the various regions of the world. Members of the steering committee agreed to organise campaigns in their own regions not only for the inclusion of equal numbers of women as men in the official delegations to Rio but also to make women's concerns an integral part of Agenda 21, the official document for Rio.

A notable feature of the Congress was a tribunal during which five judges heard 15 women from different countries testify on women's perspectives on various issues relating to the environment, including an environmental code of ethics; environment and development; and science, technology and population. The most notable outcome of the congress was a document reflecting the essence of the discussions at the congress, the Women's Action Agenda 21.³¹

During the months between the Congress in November 1991 and the official UNCED Conference in Rio in June 1992, WEDO set up task forces to analyse the draft of the official Agenda 21, to compare it with Women's Agenda 21, and to prepare amendments to strengthen the recommendations and make them reflect women's views. At the beginning of this process in the preliminary draft of Agenda 21, women's issues and concerns were mentioned only in the 'poverty' section or in the context of 'vulnerable groups'. By the end of this process, in the final draft of the official Agenda 21, women's issues and concerns were mentioned in hundreds of places, most notably in paragraphs that recognised women as actors and participants in the move towards more sustainable development.³²

Women's Caucus. Much of this success was the result of concerted efforts by alliances of NGOs during the preparatory phase leading up to the conference. This concerted effort was facilitated by an innovative mechanism introduced by WEDO, a public forum called the 'Women's Caucus'. It provided a bridge between the official deliberations and the parallel NGO deliberations. Govern-

mental delegates are invited to join NGO participants in a daily dialogue on key issues being addressed each day at the official deliberations.

The Women's Caucus was held each morning in the NGO forum to review the results of the previous day's official meetings, to share information and to plan daily strategies. Representatives of women's groups then used the daily statements to lobby their respective government delegations. By combining efforts and skills in caucus sessions, NGOs talked with delegates knowledgeably, gave helpful suggestions on possible changes and adaptations, and added specific issues and concerns where they had been left out.³³

First organised during the UNCED preparatory process, the Women's Caucus has been organised at every preparatory meeting and conference since. In addition to providing a forum for all women to air their views, issues and concerns, a major function of the Women's Caucus is to monitor all amendments and rewrites of draft documents. To focus on specific subjects within drafts, the caucus breaks into task forces. Each task force organises around one or more priority areas within the draft documents. They study drafts within the context of their particular subject areas and make revisions or suggest changes. The task forces report back to the caucus daily. From their reports, statements are produced that relate to the part of the draft UN document being discussed by delegates that day.

The Women's Caucus is credited with contributing to a landmark decision that 'key elements relating to women's critical economic, social and environmental contributions to sustainable development be addressed ... in all the substantive documentation, particularly Agenda 21, the Earth Charter and the Convention'. It further requested that recommendations from relevant meetings held by governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organisations be made available to the Preparatory Committee. This enabled the recommendations from key NGO initiatives to be integrated into the UNCED documents.

Vienna: women's rights are human rights

By the late 1980s, various international, regional and local women's groups had begun meeting to strategise on how to make women's human rights perspectives more visible. Galvanised by the successes and lessons from the Rio process, the international women's movement reached the Vienna conference better prepared than ever before.

Global campaign. In 1991 the Center for Women's Global Leadership (Global Center) organised a strategic planning meeting of grassroots activists from 20 countries. At this meeting, the participants decided to target their activities on preparing for the upcoming UN World Conference on Human Rights and to focus on 'gender-based violence against women as the issue which demonstrates most clearly and urgently what it means to expand human rights to incorporate women'.³⁴ They called for a global campaign that would take up various strategies for linking women's rights to human rights, including an annual period of global action; an international consensus-building effort; a petition drive; local

action by women's groups; documentation of violence against women; and drafting a consensus document on integrating women's rights into human rights.¹⁵

As part of the global campaign, local women's groups attended national preparatory meetings, and regional networks of women's groups attended the regional preparatory meetings. All worked to transform the limited interpretations of human rights.¹⁶ National, regional and global documents were written, exchanged and revised by women in this process, and several international gatherings were held to develop some common points of emphasis to present in Vienna.

In 1993 the Global Center organised a second strategic planning meeting to focus on how women could most effectively influence events at the Vienna Conference. The meeting brought together a small group of women from around the world who had been effective at the national and regional meetings. The specific tasks of the meeting were to work on lobbying strategies; to develop a set of recommendations on women's human rights; and, in particular, to plan a global tribunal on women's human rights.

Women's caucuses. The Global Campaign proved highly successful. In the final PrepCom before Vienna, the Women's Caucus—including women from both the North and South who worked in government, NGOs and in UN agencies—succeeded in exerting pressure to add text on women to the draft document and in forming the basis for many women to continue working together in Vienna.

Throughout the Vienna Conference, the NGO Women's Caucus met daily to assess the conference proceedings and their implications for women. A lobbying group from the caucus kept track of the drafting process in the official conference to ensure that the gains made in the preparatory process were not lost. In response to threats of new clauses inimical to women's human rights, they drafted new texts for delegates. The NGO Women's Caucus gained time slots for six short presentations from its members at the official conference.

Also, throughout the Vienna Conference, a daily Governmental Women's Caucus was organised by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). This caucus brought together women from governmental delegations or UN agencies with representatives from the NGO Women's Caucus to explore possible means of collaborating to advance women's human rights at the conference. Vienna was the first conference to have two parallel women's caucuses, which was necessary because most NGOs were denied access to the official conference.

Global tribunal. Undoubtedly, the most dramatic event in this process was the Global Tribunal on Violations of Women's Human Rights, organised by the Global Center together with the International Women's Tribune Center and others at the NGO forum. The tribunal featured women from 25 countries who had survived a vast range of human rights abuses—from domestic violence to political persecution to violations of economic rights. Their collective testimony

als provided graphic demonstration of how being female can be life threatening, subjecting some women to torture, terrorism and slavery every day.³⁷

The idea of convening a Global Tribunal on Violations of Women's Human Rights emerged from discussions over several months among those active in the Global Campaign for Women's Human Rights in different regions.³⁸ In response, the Global Center and the International Women's Tribune Center sent out a call for local grassroots hearings on violations of women's rights. During the last six months leading up to Vienna, women around the world held hearings to document individual complaints and group cases of violations of women's human rights. The resulting testimonials were recorded and the documentation sent to the UN Center for Human Rights.

The Global Tribunal was presided over by four international judges. The testimonies gave vivid expression to the life and death consequences of women's human rights violations.³⁹ The judges, working in consultation with an advisory committee of women lawyers from different regions, sought to assess accountability for the human rights abuses presented by those testifying at the tribunal, to delineate the human rights principles and agreements that had been violated, and to make concrete suggestions on how to redress violations. The judges and their advisors drafted a final collective statement that was delivered at the tribunal's closing session.⁴⁰

The organisers then secured time on the official agenda for a report on the tribunal and its recommendations. Presentations from the tribunal were followed by three speakers from the NGO Women's Caucus. One of the speakers called for a moment of silence and asked delegates to remember all the women around the world who had died or been badly injured by domestic violence during that minute. Leaders of the global campaign later reported, 'Women had arrived on the Conference agenda!!'⁴¹

Cairo: women's reproductive health and rights

In Cairo in September 1994, the United Nations hosted the Third World Conference on Population and Development. In many aspects, Cairo marked the culmination of a long struggle by the international women's movement to transform the public agenda. As one observer noted, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) represented 'a giant leap for womankind'.

Global campaign. Having listened to the polarised and heated debates on population issues at Rio, a group of women decided to initiate an international campaign to build a consistent framework on population issues among women's groups and to bring women's voices to the upcoming conference on population and development. They approached the International Women's Health Coalition, which had been working with women's health activists around the world since 1980, to convene an expert group.

In September 1992, women's health advocates from Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, the USA and Western Europe met to discuss how

women's voices might best be heard during preparations for Cairo and in the conference itself. The group suggested that a strong positive statement from women around the world would make a unique contribution to reshaping the population agenda to better ensure reproductive health and rights. The group, which called itself the 'Women's Voices '94 Alliance', drafted a 'Women's Declaration on Population Policies', which was reviewed, modified and finalised by over 100 women's organisations across the globe.

Between September 1992 and September 1994, when the Cairo conference was held, at least 15 national, regional and international women's meetings viewed the declaration. And the original London group convened a major women's conference—what it called a 'feminist PrepCom'—in Rio de Janeiro in January 1994. One of the aims of the Rio conference was to 'search for and identify common ground and universalities in women's perspectives on reproductive health and justice'. In five short days, 215 women from 79 countries who gathered in Rio generated a collective statement as well as a series of strategies and activities to ensure that women's perspectives and experiences were considered and acted upon at the Cairo conference.⁴²

As a critical part of the follow-up strategy, the International Women's Health Coalition and a core group of colleagues worldwide focused their attention on the official draft document: entering what they refer to as the 'battle of the packets'.⁴³ They decided that there were three ways to influence the official document—by influencing the composition of official delegations, by lobbying at all preparatory meetings and at the conference itself and by working with the media. Several of the Rio conference participants were appointed to their government delegations. Others mobilised a tightly planned strategy and process for the focused lobbying required in the final PrepCom and at the Cairo conference.

By the time they reached Cairo, the Women's Voices '94 Alliance and the coalition were well prepared. They had reached remarkable consensus on key issues (gender equality, reproductive rights and male responsibility) across the divides of ideology, culture and relative wealth and power.

women's caucus. Throughout the two-year preparatory period, at all of the official and NGO meetings, WEDO facilitated a daily NGO Women's Caucus. Members negotiated with official delegations to ensure that the draft document incorporated women's concerns throughout and to secure inclusion of a chapter specifically on women.⁴⁴ These negotiations before and during the conference required delicate balancing of diverse values, stark political and economic power imbalances, and other significant social and cultural differences among governments as well as women's groups.⁴⁵

At the NGO forum in Cairo, as in Rio and Vienna, every morning started with a meeting of the Women's Caucus to review negotiations. After the advocacy priorities for the day were discussed, the more than 1000 members of the caucus went into action. Every afternoon the Women's Caucus shifted venue to the official conference site to facilitate a coordinating meeting among NGO representatives in the official conference, representatives of the Women's Caucus and

members of the press. At the final caucus meeting, a 'post-Cairo Task Force' formed by the Women's Caucus presented its recommendations for an innovative new watchdog network called 'Women Watching ICPD'.

In addition, in Cairo as in Vienna, small groups of core lobbyists systematically intervened with government delegations on a timely basis not allowed by the large-group processes of the caucus. Although the negotiations bogged down over the 'brackets', in particular over one paragraph on abortion, the outcome was a clear victory for women's NGOs and for women. There is no doubt that the language used in the 'Programme of Action' document 'leads the way for new approaches to population and development, that places women's health, their empowerment, and rights at their center'.⁴⁶ By the end of the conference, governments had 'reached an unprecedented consensus' on the 20-year Programme of Action.⁴⁷

A noteworthy feature of the Cairo Conference that undoubtedly contributed to the unprecedented consensus was the number of NGO representatives on official delegations and the remarkable dialogue between NGOs and the official delegations. In particular, the US delegation made every attempt to understand the concerns of women from the developing world. Over half its delegates were from NGOs, including the vice-president of the International Women's Health Coalition and the US co-chair of WEDO. The US delegation was led by Undersecretary of State Tim Wirth, who held a daily press briefing at the NGO forum, not at the official conference hall, as an expression of his openness to NGO concerns.

Even the Secretary-General of the Conference and Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Dr Nafis Sadik, visited the Women's Caucus at one of its daily morning meetings in the NGO forum.⁴⁸ She acknowledged that the efforts of the members of the Women's Caucus—in drafting, educating participants and the public about the complexity of the issues and lobbying official delegates—had been critical to the success of the conference.

In their analysis of the remarkable consensus that was reached in Cairo, the International Women's Health Coalition writes:

The underlying basis for consensus was created by the constituency most concerned—women. For the first time, a wide range of representatives of women's organizations from every region of the world were central to the negotiation of an international population document. Working together with a common purpose, women engaged at every stage of conference preparations and at every level to gain access to negotiations. Gradually, through the conference preparations, governments and international agencies recognized women as legitimate players. Women served as members of many government delegations, and led NGO efforts to lobby governments both during preparatory sessions and at the conference in Cairo. This involvement, along with governments' consultation with women's groups in many countries and at the UN through the ICPD process, gives the Cairo Programme of Action a legitimacy and a political base of support that previous government policies and programs have never had.

At numerous points throughout the process of drafting and finalizing the document, when language accepted by the majority of governments and NGOs was threatened by a handful of delegations, women were the ones who mobilized to protect the

emerging consensus. Because women have been most affected by population policies and programs, they emerged as an unassailable moral force.⁴⁹

Shaping the policy agenda: critical changes and necessary strategies

Critical changes

The UN Decade for Women, and the decade that followed, radically reshaped the international women's movement and its relationship to the UN system and to the international community more broadly. There have been at least four dimensions: there are new players on the global stage; they have new skills and competencies; they have forged critical alliances and coalitions; and they have taken their place at the policy-making table.

New players. Within the international women's movement, as elsewhere, the older established NGOs have been supplemented by a new breed of NGOs. By far the most conspicuous change over the decade was the exponential increase in the number and types of women's groups and women's NGOs in every country of the world, and the complex of alliances, networks and coalitions set up to unite them. Most visibly, there has been a dramatic increase in women's groups and women's NGOs in developing countries.

New skills. The international women's movement has matured as well as grown and diversified. Women's NGOs have developed or strengthened their skills: substantive and technical; advocacy and political; research and policy analysis; and documentation and communication. They have learned how to operate on the global stage and how to make themselves seen and heard. Moreover, they have provided effective leadership to the development, environment, human rights and population fields.

New alliances. The number of NGO alliances, networks and coalitions have increased as well as the number of individual NGOs. Interestingly, many of these are alliances of international NGOs working with grassroots groups. Most critically, NGO networks and coalitions have been developed that cut across regional and North-South divides to build broad-based consensus on key issues.

New 'places'. Increasing numbers of women from NGOs have been offered or taken a place at policy-making tables, either national or international. They have demanded to be included, and they are increasingly recognised as important players with special competence on substantive issues.

Necessary strategies

The experience of the international women's movement offers important lessons about optimal strategies such as 'be prepared' and 'take part in the preparatory

process'. To participate effectively in policy deliberations at all levels, the women's movement did its homework and came prepared. Without collecting, knowing and analysing their facts and without building broad-based coalitions, it would have been difficult for women to influence the policy agenda. They also recognised the importance of getting involved in the preparatory process that precedes world conferences because most of the negotiating work is completed before the formal deliberations begin, with only a few key issues left unresolved.

To participate effectively in the preparatory process as well as the formal policy-making sessions, the women's movement developed several key strategies, including the following:

1. *Mounting global campaigns.* To mount pressure on official policymakers and to build coalitions and consensus, women's NGOs mounted global campaigns calling for dialogue and action at the local level; for lobbying at the national, regional and international levels; for petition drives; for gathering evidence on and documenting violations against women's rights; for attending all local, national, regional and international meetings; and more.
2. *Building coalitions and consensus.* To build coalitions and consensus, women's NGOs held multiple strategic planning meetings with a representative cross-section of women and women's NGOs from around the world: at the local, national, regional and international levels.
3. *Preparing policy documents.* To influence policy makers and official policy documents, women's NGOs drafted their own resolutions, treaties, protocols, conventions and platform documents.
4. *Influencing official delegations.* To influence the position of national governments and the composition of official delegations, women's NGOs published reports, held briefings, lobbied and nominated women and NGO representatives to be members of official delegations.
5. *Bridging NGO and official deliberations.* To bridge NGO and official deliberations at international meetings, women's NGOs developed a mechanism called the women's caucus: a daily time and space at all policy making meetings for NGOs to strategise and to hold dialogues with official delegates and policy makers.

In pursuing these strategies, the international women's movement learned to focus on key issues and on official documents, to work with all players and to become serious lobbyists. To provide coherence to their global campaigns, women's NGOs focused on one or two key issues—for example violence against women in the campaign leading up to Vienna, and women's reproductive health and rights for Cairo. To influence the outcomes of world conferences, women's NGOs focused on the official platform document for each conference. They drafted alternative or additional texts to reflect women's interests, concerns and perspectives. To influence the outcomes of world conferences, women's NGOs worked deliberately and strategically with government delegates, UN agencies, media, influential persons and other NGOs. Finally, to become serious lobbyists, women's NGOs found they needed to 'have passion, solidarity, discipline, stamina, and money'.⁵⁰

Beijing and beyond

Towards Beijing

The two decades from 1975 to 1995 have been the most dynamic in the history of the international women's movement, which was invigorated by Mexico City; grew and strengthened during the UN Decade for Women; and was empowered by the process leading up to and the victories gained in Rio, Vienna and Cairo. The international women's movement developed tremendous political and strategic skills in linking up to the UN system before and during the recent world conferences. Indeed, the movement helped change the way UN conferences are planned and conducted.

The immediate challenge before the international women's movement has been to maintain its momentum towards Beijing. To meet this challenge, it has had to keep the UN and national governments aware that the movement is watching to see how governments will deliver in Beijing on promises made in Rio, Vienna and Cairo.⁵¹

However, on the eve of the Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing in September 1995, there were signs of a well-organised and well-financed backlash to these promises. The final Beijing PrepCom, held in New York in March 1995, was marred by restrictions on NGO access and accreditation as well as cumbersome, inefficient and divisive drafting processes. After four weeks of mostly closed-door negotiations, the Draft Platform of Action was still far from a consensus document. About 35% of the draft was still bracketed, which meant that one or more governments were unwilling to accept the text's content or wording; this bracketed text would be subject to further negotiations and additional amendments in the official conference in Beijing. Most critically, all statements reaffirming the principles set forth in Vienna and Cairo remained bracketed.⁵²

What accounts for the lack of consensus over the Draft Platform of Action? To begin with, the final draft of the document was introduced very late in the preparatory process, leaving little time for delegations to prepare positions. Second, the preparatory process itself is sufficiently participatory that minority voices can slow down, derail or obstruct the process. As noted above, even a single government can call for text that it is unwilling to accept to be bracketed. At the final Beijing PrepCom in March 1995, fewer than a dozen countries (out of 184) objected to most of the bracketed text coming out of the PrepCom. And there is evidence to suggest that most of these countries are members of a sophisticated, well-funded and well orchestrated backlash to the victories achieved in Vienna and Cairo.

Beyond Beijing

Whatever the outcome of the Beijing Conference, the next challenge for the international women's movement will be to implement the promises made to women in Rio, Vienna and Cairo. It must influence and monitor national policies and programmes to ensure that they reflect the goals and mandates from the recent world conferences; translate these goals and mandates into concrete

projects; forge working relationships with the specialised agencies of the UN; train more women on how to use existing treaties, conventions and laws;⁵³ encourage women to continue to pursue many of the strategies used in the global campaigns; nurture the international networks and alliances forged during the global campaigns; and maintain links with the wider development community.

The international women's movement is well positioned, as it enters the 21st century, to consolidate and build on previous gains. The competence, solidarity, maturity, discipline, strength and will of the movement should not be underestimated. While one part of the movement has secured strategic gains for women at the global policy level, another part pursued practical gains at the local level by implementing concrete programmes, working with the specialised agencies of the UN and organising the grass roots. However, in the current global climate of social conservatism and fiscal austerity, the international women's movement will need allies and resources both from within and outside the UN system.

Notes

¹ The names of the cities that host world conferences are commonly used as a 'nickname' for the conferences held there. However, Mexico City hosted both the First World Conference on Women in 1975 and the Second International Conference on Population and Development in 1984. In this paper, Mexico City is used to refer to the first conference.

² Whether to use the singular 'women's movement' or the plural 'women's movements' is a thorny question. 'To speak of a single women's movement may attribute too great a unity to what can be perceived only as a plurality of activities and approaches, diversified by class, culture, region and the like. Yet to speak of women's movements in the plural raises concerns about what, if any, commonality there is among these groups and whether it is possible to speak of them in a global context.' Deborah Stienstra, *Women's Movements and International Organizations*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1994, p 160. I use the singular women's movement since it reflects the common goals and concerns around which women have organised at the global level and the remarkable consensus women have built in preparation for recent global conferences.

³ The international women's movement is primarily composed of and led by nongovernmental organisations: local, national, regional and international. In addition to NGOs and individual women members, the international women's movement is composed of and has benefited from the leadership of a wide variety of institutions, including governmental agencies, donor agencies, academic groups, business groups, religious groups and more.

⁴ The term 'NGO forum' is used here as a common term for the parallel NGO conference held at world conferences. Some variation on that term has been used at most but not all world conferences. For instance, the following terms were used for the parallel NGO conferences at the world conferences for women: International Women's Year Tribune in Mexico City; the NGO Forum in Copenhagen; and Forum '85 in Nairobi. The first major UN event at which a parallel NGO forum was held was the 1972 Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm.

⁵ This paper draws on several published sources which spell out in far greater detail the key players and the substantive gains. At this writing in mid-1995, parts of the story have yet to be told, at least in written form—particularly those relating to the Social Summit held in March 1995, where women's NGOs were key players and the Beijing Conference itself, to be held in September 1995. So the paper also draws on discussions with several of the key players: Peggy Antrobus of DAWN; Charlotte Bunch of the Center for Women's Global Leadership; Marilyn Carr of UNIFEM; Susan Davis of the Women's Environment and Development Organization; Joan Dunlop of the International Women's Health Coalition; Adrienne German of the International Women's Health Coalition; Noeleen Heyser of UNIFEM; Vicki Semmler of the International Women's Tribune Center; Peg Snyder (formerly) of UNIFEM; and Anne Walker from the International Women's Tribune Center.

⁶ It is important to note that the history of NGOs lobbying the international community on issues of concern to women predates the United Nations. Before World War II, for example, a number of nongovernmental organisations made a proposal to the League of Nations to prohibit sexual slavery, which was not adopted before the outbreak of the war. Soon after the formation of the United Nations in 1946, the issue resurfaced.

And by 1949, the Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others had been adopted.

⁷ Several landmark years for the advancement of women within the UN system include: 1946, when the Commission on the Status of Women and the Branch for the Advancement of Women (within the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs) were established; 1948, when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted; and 1967, when the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women was adopted. This declaration was the precursor to the Convention, which was adopted by the General Assembly in 1979 and ratified by the mandatory 20 countries in 1981.

⁸ A study of 47 international women's organisations at that time found that nine were religious in orientation, 10 were in the international relations arena, 18 were for professional and working women, seven were educational and cultural, and three were for sportswomen. Elise Boulding, *Women in the Twentieth Century World*, New York: Sage, 1977, p. 187. Only five were headquartered outside Europe or North America. The first international women's organisations were established in 1880.

⁹ The two women representatives were the Romanian representative (Florica Andrei) and the Finnish representative (Helvi Sipilä). Helvi Sipilä was later to be appointed the first female Assistant Secretary-General.

¹⁰ Hilikka Pietilä & Jeanne Vickers, *Making Women Matter: The Role of the United Nations* London: Zed Books, 1994, p. 76.

¹¹ *Ibid.* pp. 78–79.

¹² Roumfaq Jahan, 'The International Women's Year Conference and Tribune', *International Development Review*, 3, 1975, p. 38.

¹³ Pietilä & Vickers, *Making Women Matter*, p. 7.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 48. The conferences in Mexico City and Copenhagen were not able to reach consensus in their deliberations to adopt the final documents unanimously.

¹⁵ Irene Tinker & Jane Jaquette, 'UN Decade for Women: its impact and legacy', *World Development*, 15 (3), 1987, p. 419.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 426.

¹⁷ Stuenkel, *Women's Movements*, p. 91.

¹⁸ Pietilä & Vickers, *Making Women Matter*, p. 73.

¹⁹ Tinker & Jaquette, 'UN Decade', p. 426.

²⁰ Most notably at the 1974 International Conference on Population and Development; the 1974 World Food Conference; the 1979 World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development Conference; and the 1979 UN Conference on Science and Technology for Development. NGOs together with women staff in the UN system brought women's contributions and problems to the attention of all these conferences. The first female Assistant Secretary-General, together with US NGOs, organised a lobbying conference on the role of women as part of the preparatory process for the Population Conference. Women staff in the nutrition section of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) lobbied for recognition of women's role in agriculture at the World Food Conference and an NGO group organised a parallel meeting which succeeded in influencing the conference. An NGO group distributed information to and carried out effective lobbying with delegates to the Agrarian Reform and Rural Development Conference (both before and during the conference). And a group of NGOs, together with female delegates to the Preparatory Committee meetings, lobbied to have women's perspective appropriately incorporated in the texts of the draft document during the preparatory process and, when the draft text met active opposition during the conference, regrouped to draft a resolution on women, science and technology, which was unanimously adopted.

²¹ Pietilä & Vickers, *Making Women Matter*, p. 87. These were the conferences on Economic Cooperation, Water, Desertification, Technical Cooperation and Primary Health Care.

²² *Ibid.* p. 89.

²³ These 30 000 participants represented over 9000 organisations, groups and movements from 171 countries. *Ibid.* p. 139.

²⁴ Only NGOs with consultative status at the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) are automatically accredited to attend UN world conferences and the preparatory committee meetings (commonly referred to as PrepComs). In order to become accredited to attend a world conference and its PrepComs, NGOs that are not in consultative status with ECOSOC must submit specific information about their organisation and its work. For Rio, UNCTD adopted an inclusive accreditation process that allowed 1420 NGOs to attend the official conference.

²⁵ Yolanda N. Kakabadse & Sarah Burns, *Movers and Shapers: NGOs in International Affairs*, Washington, DC: World Resources Institute, 1994.

²⁶ Maurice Strong and the UNCTD Secretariat can be credited with using an accreditation process that allowed 1420 NGOs to attend UNCTD. When the Commission on Sustainable Development was formed to oversee implementation of the UNCED plan of action, they granted roster status to any NGO accredited at UNCTD. This has opened the door for greater NGO access to the UN system.

- ²⁷ Charlotte Bunch, 'Organizing for women's human rights globally', in: Joanna Kerr (ed), *Ours By Right: Women's Rights as Human Rights*, London: Zed Books, 1993, p 148.
- ²⁸ Each of these brief descriptions focuses on a few key players, strategies and events. Admittedly, many other key players, strategies and events are not mentioned. For instance, in 1991 as part of the preparatory process for UNCED, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) held a meeting called Global Assembly-Partners in Life. At that meeting, 218 success stories of women's roles in environmental management were showcased. United Nations Development Fund for Women and United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service, *Putting Gender on the Agenda*, New York: UNIFEM and UNNGLS, 1995, p 4.
- ²⁹ Pietila & Vickers, *Making Women Matter*, p 135.
- ³⁰ Ibid, p 135.
- ³¹ The Women's Congress was not the only body preparing alternative documents for Rio. One month after the Women's Congress, several hundred NGOs attended a People's Summit in Paris. They decided to undertake an Alternative Treaty Process, preparing drafts for numerous treaties to be discussed and developed in Rio among the NGO representatives. Altogether they produced 46 alternative treaties on diverse subjects related to the environment and sustainable development. Of these 46, two focused exclusively or predominantly on women while many of them integrated women's concerns into other functional themes.
- ³² Pietila & Vickers, *Making Women Matter*, p 137.
- ³³ International Women's Tribune Center, 'Claiming our rights!', *The Tribune: A Woman and Development Quarterly*, Newsletter 51, New York: IWTC, March 1994.
- ³⁴ Bunch, 'Organizing for women's rights', p 146.
- ³⁵ The Global Campaign included the following: an annual period of global action called '16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence'—during the 16 days that link International Day Against Violence Against Women on November 25 and Human Rights Day on December 10; an international consensus-building effort to bring women's human rights on to the agenda of the Vienna conference; and a petition drive asking that the Vienna conference 'incorporate women into the agenda in two ways: in relation to all the other topics; and by specifically addressing the question of violence against women'. By the time of Vienna, over 1000 sponsoring groups had gathered almost half a million signatures from 124 countries. Local action by women's groups included: holding dialogues with local human rights groups on women's rights issues; developing their own agendas for the regional conferences that were part of the preparatory process; documenting violence against women by holding local and regional hearings on the violation of women's human rights; drafting resolutions based on this material; and preparing a consensus document on integrating women's rights into human rights for consideration at the conference.
- ³⁶ Charlotte Bunch & Niamh Reilly, *Demanding Accountability: The Global Campaign and Vienna Tribunal for Women's Human Rights*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Center for Women's Global Leadership and New York: UNIFEM, 1994, p 5.
- ³⁷ Ibid.
- ³⁸ Previous tribunals, such as the one at the World Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet in Miami in 1991 and the International Tribunal on Crimes against Women in Brussels in 1976, were sources of inspiration.
- ³⁹ Bunch & Reilly, *Demanding Accountability*, p 8.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid, p 16.
- ⁴¹ Ibid, p 104.
- ⁴² Claudia Gracia-Moreno, 'Introduction', in: *Reproductive Health and Justice: International Women's Health Conference for Cairo '94*, New York: International Women's Health Coalition [IWHC] and Rio de Janeiro: Citizenship, Studies, Information, Action [CEMA], 1990.
- ⁴³ The bracketed portions of a draft document contain text on which no consensus has been reached and over which there were often heated debates.
- ⁴⁴ UNIFEM and UNNGLS 1995, p 28.
- ⁴⁵ Adrienne Germain & Rachel Kyte, *The Cairo Consensus: The Right Agenda for the Right Time*, New York: International Women's Health Coalition, 1995, p 4.
- ⁴⁶ Joan Dunlop, 'Preface' in *ibid*, p i.
- ⁴⁷ Germain & Kyte, *The Cairo Consensus*, p 1. Out of the 184 countries, 167 countries agreed to the Cairo Document in its entirety. 'In the end, only 17 nations expressed reservations, each reservation being on a specific chapter or paragraph of the Programme of Action. No country reserved on the entire document.' *Ibid*, p 3.
- ⁴⁸ Early in the preparatory process for Cairo, Dr Sadik had been extremely resistant to including NGOs in the conference process. However, under pressure from the donor and NGO community, she conceded. By the third PrepCom, Sadik was encouraging all countries to include NGOs in their delegations to Cairo. By then, NGOs had proved their worthiness in the regional preparatory meetings and the expert group meetings.
- ⁴⁹ Germain & Kyte, *The Cairo Consensus*, p 6.
- ⁵⁰ From a speech by Joan Dunlop, president of the International Women's Health Coalition, at the New England Regional Conference 'Toward Beijing: Priorities '95' held at Harvard University, March 1995.
- ⁵¹ Bunch & Reilly, *Demanding Accountability*, pp 110-111.
- ⁵² InterAction's Commission on the Advancement of Women, *Mobilizing for Beijing '95*, 4, 1995.
- ⁵³ Bunch, 'Organizing for women's human rights', p 145.

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1995 - Volume 84 (4 issues). ISSN 0035-8533.

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Scaling up the grass roots and scaling down the summit: the relations between Third World nongovernmental organisations and the United Nations

PETER UVIN

Two trends are slowly reshaping the international development system. They hold the promise of democratizing and reforming the international system and the international practice of development. One is the process of 'scaling up', in which grassroots organisations and local nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) seek to expand their impact and move beyond the local level. In doing so, they are becoming players, often reluctantly, at the national and international levels. 'Scaling down' refers to processes whereby international organisations (IOs) change their structures and modes of functioning to allow for meaningful interaction and cooperation with grassroots organisations and NGOs.

This essay analyses the nature of scaling up and scaling down, how extensively they have taken place, how that has been done, and the risks and difficulties associated with these processes. It will do so largely from the point of view of Third World NGOs and within the context of development.

Part one briefly defines terms. Part two deals with scaling up the grass roots. It first presents a typology of scaling up, and then discusses the reasons that motivate NGOs and IOs to collaborate. Afterwards, it puts forward a hierarchy of NGO participation in international regime creation and implementation. Finally, it discusses some of the dangers and risks that NGOs face when scaling up. Part three deals with scaling down the summit. It first presents various arguments in favour of scaling down the summit and then analyses how much such processes of scaling down have occurred.

The grass roots and the summit: some preliminary observations

In this paper, the generic term 'NGOs' will be used to refer to Third World, local organisations of civil society whose objective is to promote grassroots development in a participatory manner. This includes two main types of organisations: membership organisations composed of poor people who seek to advance their own interests, and support organisations that seek to create and strengthen membership organisations. The former have been called 'people's organisations' (POs), 'self-help organisations' (SHOs) and 'grassroots organisations' (GROs). The latter have been labelled 'intermediary organisations', 'self-help support organisations' (SHPOs) and 'grassroots support organisations' (GRSOS). We adopt here

the terminology of GROS for membership organisations and GRSOs for support organisations.

The number of GROS is estimated to be in the millions, with new ones being added daily. They have come into being through the activities of GRSOs or foreign aid projects, through imitating neighbouring villagers' actions, or through internal learning processes. They are composed of farmers, women, neighbours, informal sector workers, youngsters, Muslims, Christians, or recent immigrants. Their size ranges from a handful of villagers to federated structures composed of tens of thousands of persons. Their budgets are small and hard to measure, for they largely depend on internally mobilised resources that are difficult to quantify: the time and energy of their members, the labour of volunteers, the financial contributions of villagers, the small savings of women and the materials of artisans.

GRSOs are organisations that seek to beget and support GROS. GRSOs currently number anywhere between 10 000 and 30 000, with heavy concentrations in some countries (for example, India, Bangladesh, Brazil, South Africa) and noticeable absences in other countries (for example, China, the Maghreb countries, Burundi). Although some may become very large over time, employing hundreds of staff and touching millions of people—the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, Grameen Bank, Sarvodaya Shramadana, and Six-S immediately come to mind—they have usually started out small, often at the initiative of one visionary person. Most of them remain small ventures, with fewer than 20 employees. Their budgets are small (usually in the thousands of dollars) and they depend heavily on foreign aid.

This is the picture of the grass roots: millions of small organisations with extremely limited budgets apart from the internal resources of their members, and more or less supported by organisations that are small, localised, underfunded and often inefficient and elite-based. At the other end of the spectrum is 'the summit': the big, international development aid organisations, be they governmental, intergovernmental or nongovernmental. In between is a third entity, the state, which is not the subject of this essay, but is clearly a crucial actor.

The summit can be divided into three parts. The first consists of the 20 or so international organisations active in the field of development, almost all of them part of the UN system. These include the World Bank and the International Development Association (IDA), the UN Development Program (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Fund for Agriculture and Development (IFAD), the World Health Organization (WHO), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and a host of other, smaller organisations dealing with women, habitat, population, the environment, and so on. The budgets of these organisations range from hundreds of millions of dollars for the smallest ones to more than \$1 billion for WFP and UNDP, and more than \$10 billion a year for the Washington-based institutions. All of them are active worldwide and have hundreds, if not thousands, of well-paid and highly qualified employees. Since they are IOs, their members are countries, and their decision-making systems are based on governments.

A second summit actor consists of 20 or so bilateral donors, with budgets even larger than those of the IOs. Although they are very differently organised, and hold divergent domestic political views of the rationale for foreign aid, all rich countries and some OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) ones have development cooperation agencies. Except the smallest, all have budgets in the billions of dollars; then US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) have budgets above \$11 billion. They have thousands of professional employees.

A third category in the summit is composed of international NGOs (INGOs), located in rich countries and the subject of most articles in this issue. They share with Southern GRSOs their nongovernmental nature and their attachment to participatory development. Yet they are on a different plane in their access to resources as well as in their structure; they are conduits of billions of dollars of aid to Southern NGOs. Worldwide, there are about 2000 of them, located in Europe and the USA, but maybe 50 of them represent up to 80% of total resources. These resources come from the public (some \$5 billion) and from their own governments (around \$2.2 billion).¹ They often have programmes in tens of countries, draw on highly capable and well-paid staffs, and have their offices in the same Western capitals as the other summit actors.

One reason for the above distinction is to remind the reader of the basic, qualitative differences between these two types of actors. On one hand, there are hundreds of thousands of small, usually localised, financially strapped, often volunteer-based organisations; on the other hand, there are 100 or so large, professional, billion-dollar worldwide multinationals of development. The differences become clearer still when one looks at the direction of the flows of resources: the hundreds of thousands of Third World NGOs are all competing for pieces of the roughly \$50 billion of yearly development aid that is almost exclusively controlled by the 100 or so summit organisations. Some readers might object to the inclusion of Northern NGOs under the summit, and, indeed, this does injustice to a number of them. However, from the point of view of the local communities in the Third World, there is little organisational difference between most INGOs and the rest of the summit—although there might be some important programmatic differences. The large majority of the INGOs are located on the same 20 square miles of the world's surface as the other 'summitteers'; they employ people with the same backgrounds and incomes, with some individuals changing employment from bilateral agencies to INGOs to IOs; and they channel billions of dollars to the Third World.

Scaling up the grass roots

A definition and taxonomy of scaling up

Scaling up is the process by which Southern NGOs expand their impact, moving beyond being local and small. In doing so, they may eventually come to build relations with the summit. Almost all NGOs that interact with the United Nations do so as part of a process of scaling up, because few of them were born on that level and with that mandate.

Several definitions of scaling up exist in the literature. In a recent US AID evaluation of two innovative credit projects in Africa,² the term 'scaling up' is equated with expansion, or, more precisely, with the need to 'reach several times the actual number of members' in the countries concerned. This definition of scaling up as expansion of membership or target group is probably the most commonly used.

Social scientists propose more complicated definitions. Goran Hyden differentiates between scaling up organisationally and functionally.³ 'Organizationally' is defined as 'serving larger constituencies', that is, the same meaning as expansion. 'Functionally' means that the same organisation increases or diversifies its range of activities, regardless of size. Howes and Sattar talk about 'intensification', referring to the addition of new activities to existing programmes.⁴

Clark discusses 'influencing policy reform' as one form of scaling up,⁵ while Fisher defines scaling up as the process of influencing policy; she uses the term 'scaling out' to describe expansion.⁶ Although Korten does not use the term scaling up in this context, he clearly discusses a similar process where he advocates so-called 'third generation' NGOs.⁷ The latter are distinct from first- and second-generation ones by their concern for 'bridging the gap between micro and macro' (that is, moving beyond the local level), and their desire to deal with the root causes of underdevelopment and not merely its manifestations. Therefore, Korten, Clark, Fisher and many others consider influencing politics or policies to be an important form of scaling up.

Finally, and coming from a different tradition, Bernard Lecomte, a French grassroots specialist with decades of experience in Africa (and co-founder of the 'Six-S' movement) writes about different phases in the maturing of GROS—phases mainly characterised by increased capacity to innovate, generate local resources, and manage organizations.⁸ His scaling up is a matter of autonomy, self-reliance, independence.⁹

This variety of definitions is important. It allows examination of the phenomenon in several ways, providing insight into the complexity of the NGO sector. It also suggests that there are different types of scaling up, which often go together but are not identical. The typology below distinguishes four types of scaling up, in terms of either structures, programmes, strategies, or resource base.¹⁰

The first type of scaling up is when a programme or an organisation expands its size, through increasing its membership base (for GROS) or constituency (for GRSOs) and, linked to that, its geographic working area or budget. This is the most evident type of scaling up, equivalent to 'growth' or 'expansion' in their basic meanings. This is quantitative scaling up.

A second type of scaling up occurs when a community-based programme or a grassroots organisation expands the number and the type of its activities. Starting in agricultural production, for example, it moves into health, nutrition, credit, training, literacy, etc. This is functional scaling up.

The third type of scaling up refers to participatory organisations moving beyond service delivery and towards empowerment and change in the structural causes of underdevelopment. This will usually imply active political involve-

ment and developing relations with the state, or with international organisations. This is political scaling up.

Finally, community-based programmes or grassroots organisations can increase their organisational strength to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of their activities. This can be done financially, by diversifying their sources of subsidies, by increasing the degree of self-financing through income-generating activities, or by assuring the enactment of public legislation earmarking entitlements within the annual budgets for the programme. It can also be done institutionally, by creating external links with other development actors, both public and private, and by improving the management capacity of the staff. This is organisational scaling up.

There is no hierarchy among these four types of scaling up. They can occur independently or jointly. Organisational scaling up, however, occupies a distinct position: it can occur alone, with NGOs improving their management structures while keeping their membership base and activities range stable, but it is also a prerequisite for all other types of scaling up. As Hodson states, 'There is no escaping the organizational reality that any attempt to scale up impact, whatever the strategy, has serious and difficult organizational implications'.¹¹

Why do international organisations want to increase the participation of NGOs?

Schematically, IOs have five related reasons for seeking to collaborate with NGOs. These are increased funding, ideological preferences, programme effectiveness and sustainability, external pressure and the creation of constituencies.

No matter how important their financial resources, development IOs generally recognise that the development needs of the one billion or so poor people in this world are vastly beyond their financial capacities. Other sources of funding have to be found, including sources in the poor communities themselves. NGOs are seen as far better at mobilising local resources than are IOs. Hence, collaborating with NGOs may lower the cost of programmes, or provide community-based maintenance,¹² an important argument in times of budget distress.

A conservative ideology of state disengagement, privatisation, competition, self-help, and democratisation also reigns in most international organisations and development aid institutions. The dominant development ideology is predisposed towards the private sector. In this view, enterprises produce wealth, and NGOs redistribute it. Hence, one of the main reasons for the prominence of a discourse of participation, empowerment and self-help since the 1960s is the neoconservative forces behind structural adjustment and privatisation.¹³

Moreover, it is increasingly recognised that including NGOs in project management and design can entail major benefits in terms of project effectiveness and sustainability. Evaluation after evaluation has shown that projects financed and managed by the summit tend to lack sustainability, and that the prime cause for this is failure to involve local communities and to ensure participation.¹⁴ NGOs are seen as having comparative advantages in precisely these fields: flexibility, community trust, capacity to work with the poorest of the poor, to work in remote areas and independence from governments.¹⁵ It may be that NGOs are less good at using their so-called comparative advantages than their rhetoric suggests.

but they are superior to IOs in these fields.¹⁶ NGOs are also considered useful in adapting international programmes to local realities and informing specialised agency headquarters about local conditions.

IOs are under pressure to collaborate with NGOs. Part of this pressure emanates from the NGOs themselves, with thousands pushing for collaboration, proposing models, fighting projects that they consider against their interests, and generally imposing themselves as unavoidable partners. Another source of pressure can be found in donor governments that ideologically favour grassroots participation.¹⁷

Finally, NGOs can fulfill one more important function for IOs: they can help build local constituencies for IO policies and programmes. In fact, NGOs are obliged to do so by UN Resolution 1296, which states that 'the organization [NGO] shall undertake to support the work of the UN and to promote knowledge of its principles and activities'.¹⁸ UNHCR, for example, recognises that support for refugees depends on the attitude of ordinary people, and NGOs can better and more freely campaign to change these attitudes than can the UNHCR, which seeks to minimise controversy or criticism with member governments.¹⁹ Chatterjee and Finger offer a convincing argument that the main advantage of involving thousands of NGOs in the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) process has been to increase the visibility and legitimacy of UNCED and the UNDP.²⁰

Why would NGOs want to work with the summit?

Most Third World NGOs came into being to work with and in local civil society to protect forests, increase agricultural wages, receive better prices for cash crops, build social infrastructure, provide credit to members, train women, and pressure local government to build clinics and schools. Why would they seek to move beyond that and interact with the United Nations system? There are three reasons: the availability of funds, the need to influence IO policies and programmes of direct concern, and the possibility of influencing national government through the IOs.

Grassroots initiatives that are funded solely by internally mobilised resources have a limited capacity to expand activities or touch more people. They need external resources for quantitative, functional and organisational scaling up. The Bangladesh Rural Action Committee (BRAC) could not provide oral rehydration therapy (ORT) to 11 million children without millions of dollars of UNICEF money, nor could the Grameen Bank extend its programme without frequent IFAD and World Bank grants. The summit has financial resources that dwarf GRO resources or anything that they could hope to mobilise from their own governments or local private sources. Getting access to resources drives Third World NGOs seeking to build relations with the summit. If NGOs were able to find funding elsewhere, most of them would no doubt drastically reduce their relations with the summit, including the INGOs.²¹

A new type of GRSO is coming into being that is much less negative towards IOs. These are a class of professional intermediaries, not motivated by strong ideology or anti-state feelings, but by a desire to get a well-paid job done. Under conditions of tight labour markets, and with large sums of money available for

grassroots development, founding or joining GRSOs has become a viable career alternative for middle class professionals in Latin America, Africa and Asia.²² These NGOs have no qualms about collaborating with the summit, especially in the field of service delivery.

A second reason for seeking collaboration with IOs is that some of the constraints on development emanate from the international policy level. Although NGOs might have purely local objectives, they need to 'go international' to address the causes of their local problems. This is an inversion of the famous WHO slogan: 'think locally, act globally'. Some local problems, such as water pollution or depletion of fish stocks, have international causes; only international action can provide solutions.²³ In other cases, the causes of a problem may not be international, but its solutions have attracted international interest. The international humanitarian and development aid system is omnipresent in the Third World. Even if a development issue is purely local, there is a strong likelihood that an international organisation is involved in addressing the issue. The poorer the country and the weaker its government, the more important the role and the power of international development organisations. In many African countries, for instance, development is basically managed by the UNDP resident representative and the World Bank delegation. For local communities, this international presence is often as much part of the problem as of the solution. As such, it is crucial for NGOs to influence the summit; it is a prime form of political scaling up required to change local conditions.

Third, NGOs may work with international organisations to change government policies, which are often by far the most important determinants of local outcomes.²⁴ External links also can help the NGOs gain greater recognition and freedom. Indeed, the World Bank sometimes puts pressure on national governments to establish more favourable public policies towards NGOs or to allow their participation in bank-funded projects.²⁵ NGOs lobby IFAD or the UNDP so that the latter 'advocates links with NGOs at the start of its dialogue with governments'.²⁶

Types of participation by NGOs in international regime creation and implementation

Just as there are many different levels in which local communities and poor people participate in the programmes that affect them, the term 'NGO participation' covers a diverse set of roles played by NGOs at the international level. This section distinguishes five:

- Consultation/information: NGOs' points of view are surveyed.
- Surveillance/control: NGOs monitor implementation of IO policies and programmes.
- Implementation/management: NGOs are involved in implementing IO programmes.
- Decision-making/policy-making: NGOs are partners in the decision-making process of IOs.
- Lobbying is a case apart: depending on the effectiveness, it moves up or down on the hierarchy of participation between information and decision-making.

A particularity of the international system is that, although regime creation usually takes place at the global level, programme implementation is done by a myriad of individual international actors, including, but not limited to, IOS. NGOs can seek to have an impact at both levels: the global one at occasions where international regime creation is deliberately sought—international conferences, and, to a lesser extent, General Assembly, ECOSOC or World Bank Board of Governors sessions—and the level of individual international actors. In the field of development, the latter implies mostly 'low politics' regarding the design, selection and management of development projects by organisations such as the UNDP or the World Bank.

Consultation

Historically, most NGO participation in international regime creation and implementation is at the consultation level, and limited to accredited NGOs.²⁷ In the 1980s, IOS such as the UNHCR, UNDP and World Bank created institutional links for regular consultation with NGOs.²⁸ Since the 1992 Earth Summit, the number of Third World NGOs that participate in international conferences has greatly increased; the expenses of some Third World NGO leaders were even paid by the UNDP to attend the UNCED.²⁹

NGOs are also increasingly being consulted on the level of individual projects and programmes, mainly during the design phase. USAID, for example, has a 'legal requirement for consultation with, and participation by the poor in the design and implementation of programs and projects' in Africa. Since 1987, the World Bank has an operational directive obliging project managers to consult, where possible, with local NGOs during the design phase.³⁰ In practice, this consultation is still weak and often unsuccessful from the point of view of the grass roots. A USAID analysis made clear that participation by local or international NGOs was very poor, with local people largely absent.³¹ Similarly, in a World Bank study of 20 highly participatory projects, the author concluded that 'there is virtually no evidence from the 20 operations which highlights capacity of people, especially disadvantaged people, to actively and explicitly pressure the bank to develop interventions which empower them to make decisions'.³²

Lobbying

It is not possible to include the act of lobbying in the hierarchy of participation as presented above. Depending on its degree of success, lobbying can range from playing an information role to actual participation in decision making. NGO documents routinely state that 'the themes addressed by the NGOs are reflected throughout the final draft version' or that 'the victory is that NGO language has become the basis for negotiations'.³³ Yet the concrete impact of lobbying efforts is much harder to measure than these statements suggest.

An important lobbying technique that NGOs have refined is the organisation of parallel conferences, whereby hundreds of non-accredited and often Third World NGOs come together at the same time and in the same city as the main intergovernmental meeting. They seek to draw on media presence to get

worldwide exposure for their ideas and desires. At the UNCED, the NGO Summit, which brought together over 30 000 persons from the NGO sector, attempted not only to influence governments, but to create its own counter-regime. Participants adopted a series of 28 alternative citizens' treaties, including plans of action in all fields of the conference.³⁴

But NGOs need not wait for international conferences to lobby IOs. At any moment, they can exert pressure on organisations' central headquarters or field offices. This pressure can be exercised to obtain the implementation of policies, develop new programmes, or modify specific project designs. Some of the most famous examples are NGO coalitions lobbying for the reconsideration of massive World Bank dam projects, but many such efforts take place throughout the world, in various fields.³⁵

The grass roots does not have to be physically present at international conferences to influence their outcomes. Through direct government lobbying or public education, NGOs can and do exert domestic influence over the positions of their respective governments in these conferences. NGOs that manage to influence the governments of industrialised countries can have a great influence on international conferences. As a result, Third World NGOs increasingly attempt to link up with Northern INGOs in order to influence rich country governments. Haitian NGOs pass information about disappearances and torture to their Northern partners, who publish them to influence public opinion; Oxfam lobbies the World Bank to suspend a planned dam in Brazil; the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) pressures US senators to sponsor legislation for the clean-up of former military bases in the Philippines. Northern INGOs increasingly serve as lobbyists for their Southern partners, working with them to promote policy change at the summit.³⁶

The role of the USA is central because it remains the most powerful state in the United Nations. Its contributions are still the largest, and its leadership role, although contested, is still a reality. Moreover, Washington is especially vulnerable to NGO lobbying. This is partly because US politics are imbued with a culture of lobbying and partly because the executive branch is dependent on Congress. INGOs from the USA are among the largest, best-funded and most professional in the world, especially well-versed in the art of advocacy and lobbying. As a result, Congressional policy-making provides the INGO community with regular opportunities for influencing the behaviour of the most powerful UN member state. Every two years, for example, Congress has to approve the IDA replenishment; environment and development INGOs use the occasion to lobby for stricter environmental standards and more participation. Through this, some critics charge, it is mainly US INGOs that set the policy of IDA.³⁷

Surveillance

Over the years and without a formal invitation, NGOs have taken upon themselves the function of surveillance. They collect and disseminate information to hold governments accountable for the decisions to which they commit themselves internationally. By far the most successful field of NGO surveillance is human

rights.³⁸ The NGO role in international surveillance is being increasingly recognised in General Assembly declarations, thus conferring upon it a certain enhanced international legitimacy.³⁹

The surveillance function is one area where IOs and NGOs have parallel interests that are in conflict with those of governments. For the IOs in charge of the implementation of international declarations and treaties, NGOs are often the only source of information apart from official government reports. NGOs are capable of making sensitive or politically unpleasant information public—something international organisations have greater difficulties in doing, dependent as they are on their governmental members. Moreover, combined with their lobbying, NGOs can go one step further and pressure governments to change their policies, or they can attempt to influence public opinion for more vigilance on certain issues. It is hardly an overstatement when the secretary-general of the International Conference on Nutrition (ICN) states that 'when we all go home, it will be the NGOs that will continue the pressure on governments'.⁴⁰ For NGOs, the ability to refer to international declarations to justify and legitimise their work is important; these declarations provide points of pressure on governments and legitimacy to NGO actions. Thus, both IOs and NGOs have parallel interests in surveillance.

Implementation

Implementation is the role favoured by the summit in its relations with the grass roots. In the last decade or so, all UN resolutions urge governments to associate NGOs in the implementation of international programmes. The World Bank, for example, publishes a list of 'World Bank-financed projects with potential for NGO involvement'. This involvement is usually that of implementation rather than design.⁴¹

NGOs are increasingly involved in the implementation of projects financed by intergovernmental organisations. Between 1969 and 1986, for example, UNFPA spent about 10% of its funds on activities implemented by NGOs.⁴² UNICEF, FAO, the UNHCR and UNDP have programmes in which NGOs are given operational, subcontracting roles. According to a recent brochure by the World Bank, 'more than 40 percent of the total number of the bank projects approved in 1993 involved NGOs'.⁴³ However, this is usually limited to using community workers for information, and in-kind or financial contributions by villagers. Only in three cases were villagers given major management and implementation roles.⁴⁴

Decision making

Within the UN, at the level of regime creation, formal participation in decision making is impossible. Except for the International Labour Organisation (ILO), governments are the only decision makers in the United Nations system. However, on a few occasions, NGOs have managed to become internal and acknowledged participants in the regime creation.

One example is the Conference on Popular Participation in African Recovery and Development, which took place in Arusha in February 1990 and was

organised jointly by the UN and the NGOs, at the initiative of the latter. At this conference, an 'African Charter in Popular Participation' was produced, which was later adopted by the UN General Assembly and the OAU.⁴⁵ Another case was the World Bank Hunger Conference, held in late 1993. The conference content and structure were organised by a steering committee on which four US NGOs were represented, to express NGO objectives and concerns. After the conference, the steering committee was reconstituted to include five Southern and one Northern NGO consortia. In its first follow-up meeting, and at NGO request, this group decided to organise a follow-up conference in Mali. The design of this conference involved NGO representatives of the steering committee, the World Bank, the Government of Mali, and the Federation of Malian NGOs. Its objective was to modify the planning and design of World Bank-supported interventions.⁴⁶

NGOs are also increasingly involved in decision-making at the level of specific field programmes. This is basically the result of the experience and credibility NGOs gained as a result of their participation in implementation. The level of participation depends on individual personalities and the credibility of specific NGOs rather than on any formal status.⁴⁷ In many countries, the World Bank has created 'social funds' to compensate for the negative effects of structural adjustment on the poor by micro-lending. These social funds typically have NGOs on their boards of directors, sometimes even constituting as many as half the members.

Some problems in linking up to the summit

What are the problems and risks associated with this process of scaling up? At a practical level, NGO participation in international policy making is costly, and this has to be weighed against direct help to the poor and the hungry. Employing professional staff and procedures and the increased travel abroad that flow from participation in international policy-making pull the organisation's ideology and style of functioning in directions beyond the control of the grass roots. As they engage more of their time, energy, and personnel in policy influence, NGOs lose their contact with their grassroots base, and can end up promoting grassroots apathy.⁴⁸ As NGOs participate in national and international debates and learn how to be effective, they can lose sight of their goals of empowerment and structural change, and 'soften' their positions in order to be more acceptable to the summit. One observer has commented that NGOs may come to emphasise 'modernization goals' over 'empowerment'.⁴⁹

Moreover, to the extent that states and international organisations remain top-down, or repressive, or disempowering, working with them risks supporting or legitimating these processes. As Fowler writes, 'increasingly, NGOs are required to fit into non-participatory systems of development administration'.⁵⁰

Increased funding and the requirements attached to it, as well as the need to sustain it over time, creates a dynamic in favour of staying in business at any cost. It also can lead to adopting projects for which funding is available, rather than focusing on local needs.⁵¹

Fowler provides a fitting conclusion: 'maintaining accountability to its grass-roots constituency while simultaneously building competencies and credibility

with decision-makers is perhaps the overriding challenge facing NGOs that would influence policy'.⁵² The central issue remains how much NGOs can become effective actors at the level of the summit without losing their strengths—links to their communities, participatory methodology and pursuit of structural change. In other words, how can NGOs scale up without becoming like the summit?

Scaling down

Theoretical rationale for scaling down

It is generally believed that for the interaction between scaled up NGOs and the summit to be meaningful, the summit should also scale down—that is, it should adopt structures and modes of operation that allow local communities and NGOs to build their conceptual, operational and institutional capacities. In the words of one World Bank official: 'The Bank had to learn to scale down its operations in order to successfully scale up someone else's participatory effort: starting small, learning from doing, growing at a pace that is responsive to demand and capacity'.⁵³ This implies a coherent and shared vision of the goal in terms of grassroots development and empowerment. Further, it implies what Fowler calls 'management for withdrawal', that is, the development of structures and practices that are geared not at perpetuating or enhancing the hold of the summit over the grassroots, but rather towards beneficiary scaling up and autonomy. The summit 'should become less operational and work more through local structures'.⁵⁴ Until recently, the only part of the summit that has taken scaling down seriously has been the INGO sector, those whose organisational ideology resembles that of many NGOs, for example Oxfam and the Unitarian–Universalist Service Committee in the USA. The IOs and the UN have lagged behind.

Scaling down the summit is to a certain extent the mirror image of scaling up grassroots organisations and programmes. We could distinguish between scaling down quantitatively (decreasing budgets and geographical intervention levels), functionally (shedding activities to other actors), politically (working with decentralised government structures and civil society organisations), and organisationally (decentralising decision making and abandoning rigid project cycles).

Scaling down is an important element of the pressure the NGO community brings to bear on the summit. Indeed, there are hundreds of NGOs that in various ways seek to prod the World Bank and other UN institutions into adopting a more participatory, accountable and decentralised mode of functioning. In the next sections, we discuss changes underway and progress to date by some United Nations organisations.

Elements of scaling down

Scaling down covers a whole series of changes desired by NGO coalitions, which should be undertaken in parallel. They can be grouped in three categories: changes in the project cycle, changes in the profile of IO staff and changes in the structure of accountability of IOs.

There is general agreement that if the summit is serious about strengthening

the grass roots it has to abandon the project cycle as the main mode of financing and replace it with funding for programmes and institutional development. Current project cycles are too short, take too long to start, and are too rigid and large (the average World Bank loan is \$50 million). NGOs seek multiyear, flexible, more participatory 'institutional support' that builds on their existing efforts at the grass roots and strengthens them.⁵⁵ Such programmes should begin more quickly—the World Bank project cycle takes up to 12 years to complete—and last longer, while being open to renegotiation with the people concerned.

This will entail the adoption of a learning process instead of the usual 'blueprint model'.⁵⁶ Adams and Rietbergen-McCracken write about the Bank's need for 'a learning attitude, open to innovation, among those responsible for both lending and non-lending work'.⁵⁷ It also requires a decrease in the financial size of projects and the administrative conditions associated with them. Brodhead states that 'the size and the complexity of many bank-funded projects make it difficult to scale down or to escape a top-down approach to design, implementation, and monitoring'.⁵⁸

The profile of IO staff should also better reflect a commitment to community participation and NGO scaling up. The number of staff persons with experience in participatory development as well as a knowledge of the sociocultural aspects of development should be increased.⁵⁹ Performance appraisal and criteria for career advancement should be shifted away from the quantity of resources that are disbursed towards the degree of successful community involvement and long-term project sustainability.⁶⁰

Finally and most importantly, NGOs are calling for changes in the structure of accountability of IOs. This certainly implies decentralisation of decision making to the country level. As Cernea writes: 'more decentralized patterns of development work, particularly in regional and local planning, offer important opportunities both to governments and NGOs for "appropriate administration" and for organizational strategies for managing local-level development'.⁶¹ But according to most NGOs, much more is needed. This includes improving access to project information for NGOs, regular NGO and beneficiary involvement in annual evaluation and programming exercises, and creating permanent project-level feedback structures and whistle-blowing opportunities.⁶²

Experiences with scaling down

During the last decade, there has been an undeniable ideological change within the summit towards a greater acceptance of the need for grassroots participation and community involvement, and this has had operational implications. Most IOs created special facilities for small grants to NGOs. WFP local representatives can rapidly allocate small donations of food aid to local NGOs for specific actions.⁶³ The Special Facility of USAID allows its mission leaders to fund small grassroots actions. Since 1990 UNDP's Partners in Development Program has made small grants (\$25 000 per country) to NGOs possibly in order to implement community-based initiatives.⁶⁴ All these mechanisms seek to allow NGOs to scale up on their own terms—a new phenomenon in international aid. They are also inexpensive and small crumbs from the summit table. They do not modify the mode of

functioning of the summit or change the spending patterns of most activities, which is what scaling down is really about.

Other processes, however, hold greater promise for meaningful scaling down. Here, examples come from the World Bank and the UNDP. In 1984 the bank created its first mechanism for regular consultation with NGOs, and NGOs currently participate in 40% of its projects, albeit mostly at the 'junior implementation partner' level. There are three more recent changes, however, that move the bank in the direction of more substantial scaling down.

First, the bank has written into official operational directives consultations with affected groups and NGOs. This was done under pressure from Washington, and against the will of most Third World member states, which considered this a violation of their sovereignty. The language of this directive states that consultation shall be done by the borrowing government ('the Bank expects the borrower to consult with affected groups and local NGOs'), which is logical in the World Bank's language, because it always acts through governments.

Second, as a result of NGO pressure, and 'following a new policy of disclosure of operational information approved by the Executive Directors in August 1993', the World Bank has created a Public Information System, designed to 'make available to the public a range of operational documents that were previously restricted to official users'. Ordinary citizens now have access to more project information than before, but not all information.

Third, the World Bank created an independent inspection panel composed of three persons who can deal with complaints about violating its own procedures. Cases can be brought before the panel by any organisation representing the people affected. This is difficult, because it requires knowledge of a project and of the bank's procedural guidelines. In practice, that means Southern NGOs can launch complaints only with strong Northern NGO backing. Recently the first case, regarding the Arun dam project in Nepal, was presented to the panel.⁶⁵

The UNDP created its own body for regular consultation with NGOs and developed innovative funding mechanisms for them. Among the latter are the Grassroots Initiatives Support Fund, which provides small grants to self-help initiatives in Africa, and the Africa 2000 Network (followed by similar initiatives in Asia and Latin America), which supplies grants and technical assistance to Southern GROS and GSROS active in ecologically sustainable development.⁶⁶ In November 1993 UNDP endorsed a strategy paper that emphasises the need to include NGOs in its policy dialogue with governments, and to develop new operational frameworks and procedures that allow for effective capacity building of NGOs. The latter category implies potentially important processes of UNDP scaling down: modification of operational procedures regarding contracting and procurement; reformulation of UNDP staff recruitment, training and performance criteria; increased freedom for national country representatives to speak with and collaborate with NGOs; and funding for dissemination of NGO publications. These innovations have the potential to create a new learning process whereby the UNDP and its staff, traditionally highly government-centred, learn to work in a meaningful manner with NGOs.⁶⁷

Conclusion

The processes discussed above reflect and help promote profound changes in the structure and the nature of international development. NGOs are now routinely consulted during international conferences. They also lobby IOS at all levels, from the field offices to the headquarters. In this process of political scaling up, they have found partners in some of the Northern INGOs, which transmit their views to the most powerful capitals in the world. Together, Southern and Northern NGOs have assumed roles of surveillance and control of their own governments. Moreover, many NGOs have begun collaborating with IOS in implementation roles, motivated chiefly by a desire to obtain funding, but also to scale up quantitatively and spread the use of participatory methods and models. NGOs have even managed to make inroads into the level of decision making, although states clearly remain central at this level. All in all, there is no doubt that organisations emanating from civil society in the Third World have become actors in international politics, scaling up their impact beyond the local level. In doing so, NGOs are pushing IOS to scale down, to become more accountable to and supportive of grassroots organisations and initiatives.

The process of scaling down is clearly less advanced than that of scaling up. IOS remain highly centralised organisations that are attached to rigid and costly project habits. Most fundamentally, they remain under government control, which can successfully minimise NGO involvement within their borders. Yet, as NGOs scale up and also influence their own governments, the pressure on IOS to scale down necessarily increases.

The processes of scaling up and scaling down are mirror images. One process cannot advance without the other and can go only as far as the other. NGOs cannot scale up meaningfully if the summit does not scale down and develop procedures for interaction. For that matter, summit scaling down is largely the result of pressure emanating from grassroots organisations that as part of their process of political scaling up request changes in the structure and the mode of functioning by the summit. Similarly, summit scaling down makes little sense without a concomitant scaling up of the grassroots organisations. It is impossible for the summit to deal with millions of small, localised, heterogeneous organisations. Part of the impetus of NGO scaling up comes from the summit. Through its funding, the summit deliberately seeks to promote the emergence of large, professionalised NGOs. Consequently, both processes are dialectically linked, mutually influencing and enabling to each other.

The processes of scaling up and scaling down seem to suggest that the state is being caught in the middle, squeezed from both sides and pushed into irrelevance. What, if any, role is left for the state when the grass roots have scaled up and become large, efficient agents of development, interacting with a scaled-down summit? Do we not see this process of marginalisation of the state already taking place, as international and even bilateral cooperation agencies increasingly turn to direct NGO financing, bypassing the state and developing direct working relationships with NGOs? It is too early to predict the demise of the state, which still controls the production and distribution of wealth. It will remain for some time the sole actor capable of doing so on a national level. The

state retains its capacity to regulate and control NGOs, using for that purpose not only legal but also repressive means. The state, finally, remains by far the most important instance of IO decision making and implementation. No wonder, then, that the state remains the focal point of much of the attention of both the summit and the grass roots. It is through the interplay between NGO and IO pressure on the state and state influence on NGOs and IOs that the dynamic of social and political change emerges.

Notes

The author wishes to thank Mary Anderson, David Brown, Tom Murchione, Ellen Messer, Robert Northrup, Paul Wapner and especially David Miller for their comments.

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¹⁸ M Ennals, *Relations between the United Nations (Intergovernmental Bodies and Secretariat) and Non-*

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- ²⁰ P Chatterjee & M Finger, *The Earth Brokers. Power, Politics and World Development*, London: Routledge, 1994, ch 5-6.
- ²¹ M Nerfin, 'The relationship NGOs/UN agencies/governments: challenges, possibilities, prospects', in *Development, International Cooperation and the NGOs. First International Meeting of NGOs and the United Nations System Agencies*, pp 79-96; and IBASE-PNUD, Rio de Janeiro: IBASE-UNDP, 1992, p 82.
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- ²³ International relations scholars have studied this in some detail: P Haas, R Keohane & M Levy (eds), *Institutions for the Earth. Sources of Effective Environmental Protection*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994; and O Young, *International Cooperation: Building Regimes for Natural Resources and the Environment*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989.
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- ²⁵ Cernea, 'Nongovernmental organizations', pp 134-35: 'The Bank is actively encouraging national governments to consider structured NGO participation in Bank-financed projects, and to explore new forms of partnerships between governmental institutions and the growing number of NGOs'.
- ²⁶ 'IFAD, NGOs agree on measures to strengthen collaboration', *Monday Developments*, 9 July 1990, p 8. For the case of UNDP, personal communication from Sarah Timpson, UNDP Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Programmes and Policy.
- ²⁷ This section is brief, for it is dealt with excellently elsewhere in this issue; see the articles by Ritchie, Donini and Conca.
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- ²⁹ Chatterjee & Finger, *The Earth Brokers*, p 102.
- ³⁰ Brodhead, 'Cooperation and discord', p 107.
- ³¹ 'INTERACTION and the Development GAP Meet AID's Africa Bureau to Discuss its Poor Record on Popular Participation', *Monday Developments*, 19 April 1993, p 18.
- ³² Bhatnagar, 'Participatory development', p 24.
- ³³ In order of quote: M Leach, 'NGOs are playing key role in ICN preparations', *Monday Developments*, 12 October 1992, p 6; 'On the road to Brazil '92', *Monday Developments*, 20 April 1992, p 15, referring to UNCED; see also 'Keeping alive Cairo goals for women', *New York Times*, 25 September 1994, A4.
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- ⁴³ World Bank, *Working with NGOs*, Washington DC: World Bank, 1994, p 1; Brodhead, 'Cooperation and discord', p 107; increasingly, however, these are Southern NGOs.
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- ⁵⁰ Fowler, 'The role of NGOs in changing', p 67; Brodhead, 'Cooperation and discord', p 101.
- ⁵¹ Nerfin, 'The relationship NGOs', p 84; P A Kiriwandeniya, 'The growth of the SANASA movement in Sri Lanka', and K Constantino-David, 'The Philippine experience in scaling-up', both in Edwards & Hulme, *Making a difference*.
- ⁵² Fowler, 'Building partnerships', p 5; Fowler, 'The role of NGOs in changing', pp 71, 73; Brodhead, 'Cooperation and discord', p 108.
- ⁵³ Bhatnagar, 'Participatory development', p 19.
- ⁵⁴ 'Facts and feelings', p 24.
- ⁵⁵ Bhatnagar, 'Participatory development', p 18.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp 5, 7.
- ⁵⁷ J Adams & J Rietlander-McCracken, 'Participatory development: getting the key players involved', in *Finance and Development*, September 1994, pp 36-38.
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- ⁶⁰ Racelis, *People's Participation*, p 10; '1999: a vision for NGOs and AID in Africa', *Monday Developments*, 13 September 1993, p 4.
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- ⁶⁷ UNDP, *UNDP and Organizations of Civil Society: Building Sustainable Partnerships*, a strategy paper presented to, and endorsed by, the Strategy and Management Committee on 23 November 1993; UNDP, *Note to the Administrator on Progress in UNDP Cooperation with Institutions of the Civil Society*, 1994, and personal communication with Sarah Timpson, UNDP Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Programmes and Policy.

Coordinate? Cooperate? Harmonise? NGO policy and operational coalitions

CYRIL RITCHIE

The extreme diversity that characterises the nongovernmental world, which is both its greatest strength and its greatest weakness, carries through to the policy and operational coalitions that nongovernmental organisations create and in which they participate. Just as NGOs exist, even thrive, at every level of society, so do their coalitions. Almost every country, certainly every continent, has many NGOs and consequently constellations of NGO coalitions.

This essay will refer to some of these national and regional bodies, but it will primarily look at the birth, life and infrequent death of international NGO coalitions, notably those that have a bearing on the accomplishments of the United Nations system. In doing so, the author draws primarily on real-life examples of NGO coalitions, particularly on the actual or intended influence they exert collectively on governments and on organisations of the UN family.

Organisational dimensions

It is important to recall that there is a long history of NGO coalition building. Some coalitions were created over a century ago. They include World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations (founded in 1855), the International Veterinary Congress (1863), the International Federation of Metal Workers Organizations (1893), and the International Council of Nurses (1899). In this century, the list would include the World Middle Class Block (1922), the Unio Internationalis Catholica Foederationum Caritatis (1924), the Federation of International Institutions in Geneva (1929), the Conference of NGOs interested in Migration (1950), or the International Society for Labour Law and Social Legislation (1958).

The tide is not about to turn. The 1990s have witnessed the birth of such networks as El Taller, the Réseau International d'ONG sur la désertification, the Climate Action Network, the World Alliance for Citizen Participation, and the Peoples Alliance for Social Development. All these illustrations demonstrate the diversity of the NGO world and its coalitions, even as they bring to the forefront the question of what constitutes a coalition. Essentially we are dealing with organisations that are coalitions of organisations. And since nongovernmental organisations deal with the entire spectrum of human values, human aspirations, human needs and human antagonisms, it is natural that NGO coalitions similarly reflect the human condition through their complexities and defy simple definitions.

Definitions

The search for definitions is not simplified by looking at who may create or join NGO coalitions. National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are both NGOs and government auxiliaries, yet their International Federation places itself unambiguously among the world's leading NGOs. The defunct International Union for Child Welfare and the far-from-defunct International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (also known as the World Conservation Union) had or have government ministries or departments as voting members alongside national NGO voting members, but their international status was and is that of an NGO coalition. The various NGO conferences set up with bodies of the United Nations system are autonomous NGO coalitions, but they may admit to membership only NGOs selected by the relevant UN body for consultative status. Again we see the diversity and complexity of the real world reflected in the way that different NGO groupings organise to deal with that world.

Terminology is not of great help in the quest for organisational definitions. NGO coalitions use, seemingly interchangeably, a rainbow of titles: conference, association, federation, league, alliance, union, council, consortium and network. There are even such apparently limiting terms as 'committee' or 'working group'. The word 'coalition' itself appears rather infrequently in the titles of international NGO groupings, but seems to have more favour at the national and regional levels. There is no evident correlation between the types of bodies that constitute the membership of any coalition and its title.

NGO coalitions may bring together like-minded persons or organisations with deeply-shared goals (International Board on Books for young people, International Union against Cancer, for example) or persons and organisations with sharply contrasting views (the Inter-Parliamentary Union, for example, itself another example of an 'NGO-plus'). Sometimes both approaches may occur within one organisation. While the members of the International Cooperative Alliance, the International Chamber of Commerce, or the International Federation of Journalists undoubtedly share common values within their respective organisations, it would be utopian to assume that they would therefore be unanimous in a debate on solutions to the world's economic troubles. This aspect should be kept in mind with the discussion later of goals and tactics of coalitions.

Size is another element that conditions a coalition's outreach, effectiveness, professionalism and image. Although it is far from a determining factor, coalitions that directly or indirectly serve and represent hundreds or thousands of members have the capacity to invest in good management, thorough research, professionally-produced publications and comprehensive representation to the United Nations system. Examples of these can include the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Education International, the World Organization of the Scout Movement, and the International Tourism Alliance. At the same time, there are outstanding examples of coalitions that are permanently squeezed for funds but that nevertheless have significant impact on the UN system, such as the International Babyfood Action Network, the International Council of

Voluntary Agencies, the Environment Liaison Centre International and Health Action International. Nor should one overlook on a different plane the World Federation of United Nations Associations or the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Funding and services

NGO coalitions rely for their financing mainly on fees paid by their members, but there are examples—including most of those cited in this essay—of substantial funds sometimes being raised from foundations and government agencies. The precariousness of NGO coalitions resides in the general reluctance or inability of nongovernmental organisations to invest much in coordination. This causes many coalitions to live a hand-to-mouth existence unless they are authorised to seek external funding. Even then, many members of NGO coalitions fear that the fund-raising efforts of the coalition may conflict with those of the NGO. Such issues have occasionally become acute when there has been inadequate openness and transparency on the part of coalition management. Where authorised by their members, NGO coalitions may seek external funds not only for their management costs—which should be the responsibility of members—but for events and programmes that it is most appropriate for a coalition to undertake. This could include conferences and seminars; training courses; publications for information and advocacy; research and other activities that affect the interests of coalition members and that benefit from the mix of expertise or cost-effectiveness brought about through the existence of the coalition.

Whether or not a coalition has many or few autonomous programmes or projects, the nature of most coalitions is to provide a service to their members and to a cause. Consequently, coalition costs are frequently heavily weighted towards personnel compensation and the core administrative budget items that are inseparable from coordination and representation (for example travel, communications, rentals). Many disputes have arisen within coalitions over the proper balance between administration costs, which are often seen as unproductive even by NGOs that face the same quandary in explaining their budgets to their own members and donors, and productive programming costs. No general solution has been found, although the many hours of debate that governing and executive bodies have spent on the issue have often been educational and sometimes cathartic. Practical experience would indicate that salary and benefits of coalition personnel should be similar to the standards prevailing among the coalition's constituents—with allowance for geographical cost-of-living expenses—otherwise trouble is bound to surface. Coalitions that have a close relationship with the UN system are often subject to particular scrutiny by their members to ensure that the mis-stated 'inflated UN salaries' do not become the norm in the NGO coalition. Misapprehensions are notoriously hard to dissipate, save through the most open and honest divulgence of facts.

Such openness—desirable in all NGO dealings—is greatly facilitated if the NGO coalition has a clear legal basis and rule book. In the absence of an international legal instrument governing nongovernmental organisations, their coalitions must conform to national legislation. Concepts and legal terminology vary greatly

from one system to another (for example, non-profit corporation, public-benefit institution, voluntary association, foundation, trust); they have been discussed extensively in this issue and elsewhere. An NGO coalition will always need a legal status that raises no doubts about its capacity to manage its funds, engage its personnel, and conduct its business. Thereafter the internal regulations should emphasise the harmony that should reign among the coalition members in pursuit of their common goals, rather than emphasising such detailed written constraints that sooner or later the coalition's actions will be impeded. Of fundamental importance is the requirement that coalition members and leaders first determine what is wanted in policy and structural terms, and only then involve the lawyers in writing the legal texts; legal draftsmanship can never fill a policy-making role.

Governance dimensions

Contact with and influence on the United Nations system is the *raison d'être* of many NGO coalitions and a substantial part of the activity of many others. Conferences of NGOs have consultative or similar status with one or another UN body. The conferences exist to protect and enhance that status and to give procedural or substantive consideration to issues that come before—or should come before—the relevant UN body. The relationship between each conference or committee of NGOs and its mother UN organ varies widely. The NGO Conference and Standing Committee of the UN Educational Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) benefits from year-round financial and material support from the UNESCO budget. In return, the organisations elicit, foster and provide substantial and substantive input at many levels of the UNESCO secretariat. UNICEF also provides modest financial support to 'its' NGO committee while seeking from the committee both regular and *ad hoc* input into its deliberations and field work. The World Bank funds an NGO-Bank Committee whose main concern over the 14 years of its existence has increasingly been to criticise World Bank developmental concepts and practices, and more recently to offer alternative approaches. In this example, there are of course a great number of other NGOs outside the NGO-Bank Committee that have offered persistent and much more virulent criticism of the Bank; these are only loosely organised in floating and perpetually-renewing coalitions.

Other parts of the United Nations system work equally closely with self-generated NGO coalitions at the consultation level without the elaborate rules of consultative status. Examples include the UN High Commissioner for Refugees with the International Council of Voluntary Agencies, a relationship that has recently culminated in the widely-supported and useful Partnership-in-Action (PARINAC) initiative; the UN Centre for Human Settlements with the Habitat International Coalition, with exceptionally close collaboration leading toward HABITAT II in 1996; and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) with the Environment Liaison Centre International, whose constructive criticism of UNEP's performance has not been muted over the 20 years of its existence, irrespective of the significant financial support provided throughout that time. Another variant is illustrated by the practices of the World Health Organization

(WHO) and the UN Development Program (UNDP) that do not have standing NGO conferences but often convene sectoral or technical consultations with NGOs. Recent sessions of the WHO have focused on alcohol abuse or AIDS, for example; UNDP has looked at poverty or the environment and development link.

Diverse UN-NGO coalition links

Consultations between a UN body and an NGO grouping, however, represent only a fraction of interactions. All the UN organs mentioned above work with and through standing and temporary NGO coalitions to promote or implement programmes worldwide. Whether through formal contracts, standing agreements, or *ad hoc* arrangements, UN organisations collaborate with and often rely on NGOs to deliver services, test new ideas, and foster popular participation. By belonging to an NGO coalition that has systematic relations with UN organs, an NGO has a certain additional legitimacy and also has the opportunity to join the collective exercise of responsibility and to influence the decision making of that UN body. UN secretariats and NGOs are often confronted with a common problem, namely persuading governments to adopt a particular course of action, whether it be allowing food convoys to reach refugees or ratifying the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. NGO coalitions are powerful allies of the UN in such matters, and vice versa. NGO coalitions are perhaps increasingly essential partners in the advocacy roles that are needed to ensure that governments make decisions in the global public interest and carry out the obligations that result from international conferences and conventions. These activities may not have the media attraction of disaster relief or massive human rights violations, but they lie at the root of remedying many of the situations that will call for short-term media attention.

These further examples of UN and NGO coalition links fall short of exhausting the forms of existing experience. The Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC) is an interagency committee created in 1971. This committee takes part in deliberations on an equal footing with UN, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International labour office (ILO), together with four NGOs that are both associations and coalitions: the International Cooperative Alliance, the International Federation of Agricultural Producers, the International Union of Food, Agricultural and Allied Workers Associations and the World Council of Credit Unions. The members provide COPAC's funding, and external financial support is sought for services, research, seminars and the like. A similar vein of equal participation, along with equal rights and responsibilities, can be found in the Administrative Committee on Coordination's Sub-Committee on Nutrition, in the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)/NGO Committee on Central and Eastern Europe, or in the Nansen-Medal Committee, which is serviced by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). A remarkable case of fruitful and intense cooperation exists within the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA), where the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and Inter-Agency Support Unit give unprecedented access to particularly relevant and competent NGOs and have an officer

named to their staff by the appropriate NGO coalition, the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA).

These examples show that when both sides see that the product will be enhanced by unrestricted collaboration, the doors open. NGO coalitions that are, to repeat the key term 'particularly relevant and competent' can and must find ways to pass through these doors. In terms of both effectiveness and credibility, the UN and NGOs both benefit, and the result is better. Since the result is so often the improvement of humanity's living conditions, notably in developing countries, what better reason could there be for governments to authorise and encourage 'their' UN to be more open and innovative in its structured and less-structured relations with NGO coalitions? In these times of financial strain, the cost benefits are also persuasive.

Special mention must be made of the ILO, though no other intergovernmental agency is rushing to emulate its unique tripartite structure, in which representatives of governments, employers and workers interact on every aspect of every decision. The employers' and workers' representatives are grouped in coalitions within coalitions. And 75 years of experience and tradition have brought the art of confrontation, negotiation and compromise to singular heights. Some echoes of ILO's successful functioning are occasionally heard in proposals to institute a People's Assembly or People's Chamber alongside the UN General Assembly, though the democratisation of global governance has not yet worked up the necessary head of steam.

World conferences

One area in which the democratisation of global governance is probably building momentum is the participation of NGOs and their coalitions in international conferences. As far back as the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, the UN itself—particularly the secretary-general of the conference, the omnipresent Maurice Strong—created an NGO committee that was in effect a coalition to provide advice. For the conferences on population (Bucharest, 1974), food (Rome, 1974) and habitat (Vancouver, 1976), NGOs created their own coalitions, pushed the idea of producing an NGO conference newspaper and took on the arduous role of organising a parallel NGO forum. In the later 1970s and throughout the 1980s, UN conferences became inseparable from increasingly complex and expansive NGO participation, on topics like desertification in Nairobi (1977), science and technology for development in Vienna (1979), population in Mexico City (1984) and the first three world conferences on women. By the 1990s NGO participation in and NGO coalition-forming around world conferences seemed at times to have reached satiety, only to be surpassed anew with gatherings in environment and development in Rio (1992), human rights in Vienna (1993), population and development in Cairo (1994) and social development in Copenhagen (1995).

There may be disagreement on whether the very holding of UN world conferences, even world summits, has become counterproductive in terms of the time, money and energy invested in them. But since conferences on women (Beijing, 1995), HABITAT II (Istanbul, 1996) and probably both racism and

migration in the immediately following years are already scheduled, there can be no diminution in the interest and attention that NGOs and their coalitions will give to these events. Two factors are particularly important in this consideration. In the first case, world conferences and summits are the occasions—not always fully seized—for a truly global airing of issues vital to humanity's future. They are the occasions for governments to make the decisions of principle that cannot sensibly be made only at the national level. They are the occasions for the setting of standards for governmental and human behaviour, and for a look at the longer-term needs of the planet, beyond the confines of national electoral or budgetary considerations.

These are utopian goals and reality falls far short of them. This reality in no way diminishes their fundamental importance, and it leads directly to the second factor to be discussed in this essay. World conferences and summits need the full-scale input and presence of NGOs and their coalitions to have any hope of achieving their goals. Governments must have available for these conferences—notably in the preparatory phases—the best expertise that civil society can provide: professional, technical, legal, political. Governments and civil society are partners in improving the human condition and NGO coalitions have an increasingly important responsibility to procure, mobilise and channel that expertise. Furthermore, governments must be made aware that civil society is listening and watching their moves, declarations, decisions, silences and compromises. The organised and increasingly massive presence of NGOs throughout all phases of world conferences is a manifestation of that role, which should be greatly reinforced during the implementation of declarations and plans of action. The heterogeneity of NGOs' input and interest has led to the creation of yet more coalitions—based on subject, geographic location, age, gender, language, even on enthusiasm or courage. There is no turning back from this path. These coalitions should increase their effectiveness through screening their members' relevance and competence, and securing some degree of financial autonomy. Governments, the United Nations and NGOs will all benefit from collaboration and interaction.

To improve the impact of NGOs on future world conferences, some practical questions should be addressed now. On many occasions in the 1970s and 1980s, NGOs' preparations for world conferences were stimulated or guided by a committee under the authority of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) (CONGO); there was considerable stability and transmission of experience from one event to another. There was also unremitting verbal sniping at the leaders of these CONGO committees; the NGO world is nothing if not independent-minded, which is a virtue because how else would even the most recondite human cause find a group to defend or attack it. The growth in the numbers of nongovernmental organisations appearing on the international scene, especially because so many have solely national or local bases, has somewhat overwhelmed the CONGO mechanism, and occasionally the UN mechanisms too. This has reduced its broad acceptability as a neutral focal point for harnessing NGO energies. Those who participated in the Rio (1992), Vienna (1993) or Copenhagen (1995) processes recall the initiatives, upheavals and chagrins that accompanied CONGO's efforts to play its central facilitating

role. Whereas the conference planned for 1995 in Beijing has seen a more orderly planning process, the multiplicity of coordinating, cooperating and harmonising mechanisms now in place in the NGO world will need to find some platform for dialogue to achieve, as a strict minimum, the elimination of direct competition for funds, meeting space, speaking slots, big names, government delegates' ears, and even computers and typewriters.

That listing of minimum targets for augmented NGO coordination at conferences should be expanded to the physical running of NGO forums; the production of NGO newspapers (must there be five daily conference papers?); sponsorship of developing NGOs and orientation of first-time NGO participants; coherent production of common NGO position statements; and, above all, designation of an NGO coalition to mobilise follow-up and monitor implementation of the conference results. The democratization of global NGO governance of the future will make it all the more difficult to achieve such cooperation, but it would be unwise to delay making an effort.

No discussion of the world conferences 'map' and the place of NGOs on it can end without a specific reference to one unusual and commendable example of partnership, namely the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) in 1990. The executive heads of four agencies (UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank) invited governments, IGOs, and NGOs to participate in the preparatory process (including substantive regional meetings) and in the conference itself on the basis of complete equality of status and decision making. No one's self-love appears to have durably suffered and no insurmountable difficulties were encountered in reaching consensus. The follow-up to WCEFA was also intended to be innovative in that representatives of the four intergovernmental sponsoring agencies and of their four related NGO coalitions were to sit in partnership on a joint implementation committee. However, UNDP had not established a UNDP-NGO coalition, and the World Bank-NGO Committee had not been sufficiently involved in WCEFA to recognise the importance of joining the follow-up. Fortunately, the UNESCO- and UNICEF-related NGO committees have kept the flame alive. But this case history illustrates the danger of taking for granted the reactions of NGO coalition members when initiatives are perceived as coming from outside their ranks, and the parallel advantage of having as coalition leaders persons with sufficient international experience to know when and how to seize opportunities for new programmatic and governance methods.

UN conventions

UN conventions are yet another area where fruitful cooperation between the United Nations and NGOs offers lessons from the past and promises for the future. For the reasons given earlier, ILO conventions are a story in their own right, with representatives of governments, employers and workers responsible for drawing up, adopting and implementing such fundamentally important instruments as the 1948 Freedom of Association Convention, which guarantees workers and employers worldwide 'the right to establish and ... to join organizations of their own choosing without previous authorization', or the 1981 Collective Bargaining Convention, which 'applies to all branches of economic

activity.' Beyond such ILO standard-setting are a host of other UN conventions, covenants and treaties. These are all of basic concern to one or more NGO coalitions, whether they deal with human rights, refugees, the law of the sea, civil and political rights, nuclear weapons or any of the multitude of other issues that are central to the purpose of both the United Nations and nongovernmental organisations. NGO participation in drafting some of these texts has been remarkably strong—for example in regard to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment; the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; and the Conventions on Desertification and on Biological Diversity. Moreover, in the statement issued at the 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, the active cooperation of NGOs was described as essential to enable the treaty bodies to function effectively. For ample proof of the validity of that statement it is sufficient to look at the freedom of expression that prevails for NGOs and NGO coalitions in the sessions of the UN Commission on Human Rights. Although increasingly subject to curtailment because of repetitiousness and occasional abuse of speaking rights, freedom of expression is nonetheless significantly greater here than in other UN chambers. Further evidence of the role and responsibilities exercised by NGOs in this domain, which constitute precedents for future progress in governance, can be found in the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. It provides access to NGOs by virtue of the convention that it monitors; and it has completely open sessions where NGO input constitutes the substance of the debate. A coalition of NGOs concerned with children's rights provides intersessional focus for these issues.

With so much testimony available on the positive results achieved through responsible UN-NGO cooperation on matters of programme and governance, one might be forgiven for assuming that states, as the political masters of the UN, would be only too ready to encourage and provide opportunities for such interactions. Yet in relation to some recent or forthcoming conferences or other UN events, statements have been put on record that NGOs shall have no negotiating role *vis-à-vis* governmental deliberations. This is a stipulation more honoured in the breach than the observance. Several examples throughout this essay of substantive actions and contributions by NGOs to UN conferences and conventions have been close to that of a 'negotiating role'. They have been so important to outcomes that it is difficult to see how governments can sensibly cut themselves off from such critical intellectual and specialist inputs. Depending on the circumstances, NGO coalitions have been important in stimulating, channelling and managing such inputs. They should be ever more vigilant and entrepreneurial in defending and promoting the right of civil society to bring its professional competencies into the centre of international deliberations.

In his address to NGOs in September 1994, the UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said, 'Nongovernmental organizations are a basic form of popular representation in the present-day world. Their participation in international organizations is, in a way, a guarantee of the political legitimacy of those international organizations ... NGOs are an essential part of the legitimacy without which no international activity can be meaningful.' The secretary-general renewed this declaration of faith when he spoke to the World Economic

Forum at Davos in January 1995. There he said, 'I should like nongovernmental organizations to occupy an increasingly significant place within the United Nations itself. From the standpoint of global democratization, we need the participation of international public opinion and of the mobilizing powers of nongovernmental organizations.'

Strategic dimensions

NGO coalitions are as varied as the world they reflect, respond to, occasionally define and constantly monitor. Many are single-issue on such matters as disarmament, whaling, philately, intellectual property, cardiology, pesticides, female circumcision, road transport, adult education, credit unions, ageing. This haphazard enumeration—based on the existence of real networks—shows that single issues are multifaceted and represent focal points of concern rather than narrow and exclusive tracks. It is the members of coalitions who define their specificity, frame their missions and policies and determine the broad links with other related coalitions, networks and alliances. Even single-issue coalitions (and there is virtually no such animal) will need to associate not only with NGOs working in their field but with many others whose economic or social work is relevant to theirs. How much more comprehensive therefore must be the strategic thinking and planning of multisectoral coalitions, and how much more broad their goals and outreach. The World Council of Churches, for example, touches in one way or another most facets of human existence. So too, though for different reasons, do the International Alliance of Women and the International Chamber of Commerce. These and similar bodies are both coalitions and associations, and the choice of term is not particularly relevant to the choice of a coalition's strategies or its mode of operations.

Variety of approach

Coalitions adopt many different stratagems and tactics to convey their messages. The coalitions that Greenpeace and The Development Gap assemble for meetings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund adopt dramatic postures, with one eye on media coverage. Opinions are divided, including in the NGO community, about the value of this approach. Others prefer long-term lobbying of government delegates and of the media, whether it be in relation to the World Bank or FAO, for example, or to the UN regional commissions. Lobbying of national governments and officials at the country level is also a prominent tactic of NGOs and their coalitions. Trade and development issues have long been a priority for many networks for a long time, and the International Coalition for Development Action was specifically set up to ensure that knowledge, procedures, successes and failures at the national level would be shared and built on in other countries. Women's coalitions have blossomed in recent years and have had singular success at both national and international levels. They have built on the patient work of long-established women's associations in combating discrimination, exclusion, violence and arrogance.

On another level, the very first UN international year, World Refugee Year in

1959–1960, was proposed by individuals, lobbied for by NGOs and coalitions (notably the Standing Conference of Voluntary Agencies Working for Refugees, a predecessor of ICVA), and proclaimed by the United Nations. The world organisation then gave its formal recognition to an NGO coalition set up solely for the International Committee for World Refugee Year, which disbanded after a three-year life span, having been a trend-setting network in organising fund-raising and public advocacy.

More recently, a similar story can be told of the International Year of the Family (1994), which also owed its origins to NGO initiative. Virtually the only major international activities highlighting the year were in the hands of NGO coalitions, based in several 'UN cities', created to promote and propagate the year.

Only a few of the coalitions mentioned in this essay have gone out of existence. However, some have experienced, or are today experiencing, a period of quiescence for policy or financial reasons, or because one or more competing coalitions have come into existence and have eaten into the market. Until the 1970s or 1980s, most coalitions seemed to have been created as permanent coordinating mechanisms or federations. Coalitions created to relate to UN years or conferences have usually expired shortly after the specified time frame. Although nongovernmental organisations will always act independently and enthusiastically to achieve their goals, those contemplating setting up coalitions should reflect somewhat longer and inquire somewhat more deeply about whether or not there is a suitable coalition or network already in existence. For example, it is often asked whether there is indeed a need for so many networks serving women's rights, youth, sustainable development, children, education and so forth. Perhaps the answers will come from donors, who may begin to look askance at so many applications announcing that 'NGOs have, for the first time, acted to ...'

Output dimensions

Many illustrations have been given of the variety of outputs that NGO coalitions expect to produce as they strive to serve their members and their causes. If it is assumed that a coalition has value only if it provides services that would not otherwise be available, then we again confront the issue of seeking a definition of a coalition. If one may define a group by describing outputs, we may note that coalitions have had both successes and failures in providing legal and fiscal defence or protection of their members and their members' interests; in obtaining or channelling funds for projects or contracts; in securing access to authorities or goods that would not be possible for the members to have individually; in analysing and distributing information; in recruiting, training and evaluating staff and consultants; in mobilising support, goodwill, enthusiasm and hope among members, supporters, donors, or clients; in establishing the parameters and mechanisms for interagency cooperation, whether among individual NGOs or among networks, or a combination of these; in advocating policies, educating publics, raising awareness and changing minds; in partly filling the gap in NGO

collective or organisational memory; and last but not least in being available so that a coalition does not need to be created to respond to each new crisis.

The many examples of NGO coalitions cited have shown that coalitions span a wide range of organisational characteristics, professionalism, enthusiasms, policies, persistence, and of substantive and geographical scope. Only members can determine when a coalition has outlived its usefulness, sometimes manifesting their views not by formal legal action but simply by walking out. Indeed, starting and maintaining a coalition is surely more often a matter of shared vision and solidarity than a shared rulebook. Coalitions achieve results because members desire and commit themselves and their resources, not because a constitution is a well written guide to action. A coalition is a particular form of collective action; determination, inspiration and imagination are the essential glue holding its members together.

Civil society needs coordination, cooperation, harmonisation. Responsible policy and operational coalitions of nongovernmental organisations help provide for such accomplishments. International life and particularly the United Nations are the beneficiaries of such work and commitment.

Note

The author has drawn on a miscellany of official and informal documents of the United Nations Organization, its Specialized Agencies and other secretariat organs, and of the Union of International Associations. Background for this article also stems from reading a variety of publications from NGO and NGO coalitions, notably those associated with UN bodies and world conferences.

Islam and Christian Muslim Relations

GENERAL EDITOR

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Islam and Christian Muslim Relations (ICMR) was launched in June 1990 and has been hailed by scholars of Islam, Christianity and religion in general as well as by social scientists, educationists, community and religious leaders. Interest has come from a great variety of Christians and Muslims eager to understand the problems, chances and successes experienced in Christian-Muslim coexistence.

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1996 - Volume 7 (3 issues). ISSN 0959-6410.

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Partners in development? The state, nongovernmental organisations and the UN in Central America

ETER SOLLIS

The number, size and type of nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) has grown rapidly in Central America over the past 20 years. Expansion was driven largely by increased international NGO aid during the political crisis and violent conflict of the 1980s. Inter-institutional relationships also evolved over this decade. Official donors, including specialist UN agencies, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and special UN programmes started to work with NGOs and grassroots groups. However, NGO and state relations remained weak and constrained by mutual distrust.

With Central America's war-torn societies now in the process of recovery, donors expect NGOs to have three positive impacts on future development. First, NGOs should help alleviate the effects of adjustment on poor and vulnerable groups. Second, NGOs should contribute to post-adjustment recovery policies that reduce poverty, develop human resources and protect the environment. Third, a thriving NGO sector should intensify democratisation processes by strengthening and pluralising civil society. This essay examines the growth of NGOs in Central America and the evolution of NGO and state relations, before looking at the UN's relationship with nongovernmental organisations and the role of UN agencies in realising the expectations placed on these organisations.

The political and economic context

The 1980s were the most turbulent years in Central America's recent history, as brutal conflicts in Nicaragua (1981–1990), El Salvador (1980–1992) and Guatemala (1962 to present) uprooted two million people and left 150 000 dead. Civil wars also deepened economic deterioration. Economies shrank and per capita incomes fell sharply under the combined effects of war, external shocks and adverse terms of trade movements. Even countries not directly affected by conflict suffered the side effects of refugee influxes, trade disruptions and investment destabilisation.¹

Resolution of Nicaragua's and El Salvador's civil wars took place against the backdrop of communism's downfall, a factor that has not expedited an end to Guatemala's conflict. But negotiations and concessions have left the political landscape littered with incomplete processes of democratisation, demilitarisation and institutional reform.² Central America's emerging liberal democracies stand on shaky foundations. Although liberal democratic systems—with their periodic competitive elections, legalised leftist political parties and modicums of freedom

of speech and association—represent a shift from pre-conflict military regimes, evolving political structures fall short of guaranteeing the essential elements of a functioning democracy, defined as ‘effective participation by individuals and groups, a system of accountability, and political equality.’³ With few civic traditions, and the memory of cruel war still fresh for large sectors of the population socialised by decades of oppression and overbearing officialdom, experience teaches that survival is best assured by silence, pretence and ignorance—behaviour that is the antithesis of political participation.⁴

The region’s social fabric has been stretched to breaking point by orthodox stabilisation programmes designed to restore macroeconomic balances, cut inflation and steer vulnerable economies towards new, outward-orientated growth. With budget-cutting, private sector promotion and the privatisation of public sector enterprises, inflation has been checked and budget deficits cut, but GDP growth rates remain sluggish. Benefits from privatisation have accentuated the gulf between an affluent minority and the poverty-stricken masses. Indeed, recent improvements in basic indices—infant mortality, access to potable water, life expectancy at birth—disguise deeper impoverishment trends, and the large and increasing numbers, mainly in rural areas, who live below the poverty line.⁵

Under donor pressure to improve equity and transparency in resource allocation, institutional reforms to increase access to basic services include decentralisation policies. Both money and responsibility have been delegated to organisations closer to consumers. Constitutional amendments have increased the funding for municipal government throughout Central America. For example, Guatemala has now made it mandatory for 8% of ordinary government revenue to go to the municipalities for capital investment. Decentralised poverty programmes like the social investment funds count on municipal governments to identify priority social infrastructure. Decentralisation policies also depend on the reconstitution of associational life; the success of educational reforms in El Salvador is wholly attributed to the fact that Community Education Associations contract teachers directly and manage school properties.⁶ The dilemma for urban elites who monopolise political and economic power is that organised beneficiary participation creates conditions for greater grassroots democracy and broader local autonomy at the same time that it facilitates smaller, cheaper and more cost-effective government. A consensual solution to this contradiction is the problem of governance in Central America today.

The growth of nongovernmental organisations

The growth of NGO activity in Central America dates to the 1960s and to two consonant processes. On the one hand, heightened Northern public interest in development—sparked by the UN Development Decade and the Food and Agricultural Organization’s (FAO) Freedom from Hunger campaign—created conditions for enhanced NGO fundraising. On the other hand, credible Southern counterparts that were competent to request funds, execute projects and provide narrative and financial reports, began to emerge out of Catholic action groups and Christian base communities, as well as community development and self-help groups sponsored by external actors like Peace Corps volunteers and

field-based agencies such as Catholic Relief Services (CRS). Local NGO numbers also increased thanks to massive international disaster relief programmes mounted to respond to the 1972 Managua earthquake, the 1975 Honduran hurricane and the 1976 Guatemalan earthquake. In Guatemala, for example, in 1976 and 1977, over 150 new associations were registered each year, a 50% increase on the pre-earthquake rate.⁷

When war engulfed the region, the rate of increase slowed. New spaces for association were created in the latter half of the 1980s, however, as the scale of repression and level of fighting diminished and concerted peace efforts were pursued through the Contadura and Esquipulas processes. By 1989 there were over 700 NGOs in Guatemala;⁸ in 1990 there were 300 Nicaraguan development NGOs;⁹ and by 1992 there were over 700 Salvadoran development institutions and association, over half founded after 1985.¹⁰

The 1980s also witnessed a new phenomenon as the numbers of international NGOs operating in Central America increased sharply. Many took unprecedented decisions to establish field offices, especially those traditionally operating programmes from headquarters offices. Nicaragua was the most favoured location, and by 1989 there were over 100 international NGOs represented there. After the Sandinista electoral defeat, significant numbers of solidarity-type groups left the region while some development NGOs relocated elsewhere, especially in El Salvador and Guatemala, to take advantage of opportunities offered by changing political conditions. The crisis also attracted conservative, often evangelical, agencies that worked in the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded emergency programmes in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. Project Hope and World Vision were recruited to work in El Salvador. Other groups such as Family Foundation of America, Direct Relief International and the Knights of Malta worked closely with Salvadoran armed forces in civic action programmes.

The scale of NGO funding questions the stereotype of NGOs as small players in Central America's unfolding drama. Hard data on funding is difficult to gather because of the large number of funding sources, but estimates put the annual level of funding at over \$200 million annually at the end of the 1980s.¹¹ NGO poverty-related spending in some countries outstrips government poverty efforts. In Honduras for example, NGO poverty spending in 1989 was estimated at \$50 million, twice the annual budget of the social investment fund, the government's main poverty safety net.¹² Equally, NGOs managed large and significant amounts of humanitarian assistance. In El Salvador, DIACONIA, an ecumenical organisation, alone received about \$6 million annually starting in 1981, peaking at nearly \$10 million in 1986 and again in 1989; its \$65 million total income approached the \$75 million spent by USAID through the government's displaced persons programme between 1982 and 1992.¹³

The nature of the relations between donors and local NGOs developed beyond the purely financial. Throughout the 1980s many donors, including some bilaterals, preferred to channel humanitarian assistance through NGO groups, despite improvements in government programmes, largely because external support was intended to impart a political as well as a humanitarian message. The abundant funding through the Moravian Church on Nicaragua's Atlantic

Coast, DIACONIA in El Salvador and Guatemala Catholic Church organisations conveyed donor repugnance with bloody government counterinsurgency policies.

External NGOs also used their engagement with the region as a vehicle to explain the region's crisis to their respective constituencies. As resources flooded into the region, information flowed out—with added credibility afforded to eye-witness reports provided by field staff based in the region. The power of information and the importance of lobbying converged on the impact of the contra war on Nicaragua's health and education development; humanitarian space to meet the demands of uprooted people; and human rights violations against civilian conflict victims and humanitarian workers. For example, the collaboration created by FUNDASAL, the Low-Cost Housing Foundation, with support from the San Salvador Archdiocese, to promote the 1986 Tenancingo repopulation project shifted the terms of debate on humanitarian assistance for Salvadoran displaced persons. This high-profile project supported by a range of donors—including European governments and NGOs reflecting Protestant, Catholic and non-confessional constituencies in the USA and Europe—minimised human rights abuses, gave new legitimacy to the needs of the displaced and accelerated the resettlement process by establishing the fact that civilians lived in the conflict zones.¹⁴

The political view of NGOs

The philanthropic view of NGOs held by donor governments is not one generally shared by Central American governments. In fact, governments of every political stripe have taken a political view of NGOs. Two historical phases, collaboration on modernisation and confrontation over empowerment, characterise the evolution of government and NGO relations.

Collaboration on modernisation

The modernisation paradigm dominated development planning during the 1960s and advocated expansion in basic social services to maintain high growth rates. It implied a transformation in the state's role in welfare provision, most clearly expressed in El Salvador as the shift 'from a patron system to one where the state covers health and social welfare'.¹⁵ International and local NGOs shared modernisation's basic premises and developed significant involvement in welfare activities like food distribution and nutrition projects. Typically, Public Law 480 was channelled by US NGOs—for example, CRS to CARITAS for distribution to mother's clubs, parent-teacher associations and farmers' clubs engaged in school lunch, mother-child health, and food-for-work programmes. Convinced by arguments that drop-out rates and children's health would improve as a result of school lunch programmes, international NGOs like Oxfam paid for vehicles to transport personnel and food. Governments encouraged welfare programmes. At minimal cost, they gained credit for high-profile, national initiatives; for example, at the height of the Honduran school-lunch programme in the 1960s, over 100 000 school children were fed daily. Equally important for governments, NGO

welfare programmes did nothing to challenge the official view that beneficiaries should be passive recipients of development rather than active participants.

Confrontation over empowerment

NGO and government collaboration virtually ended by the early 1970s, with the failure of the modernisation paradigm. With revenues stagnating, governments proved less willing to assume additional welfare spending.¹⁶ Increasingly, NGOs also understood development less as welfare provision than as a fundamental societal transformation.

A major factor was the content of the Catholic Church's pastoral work with poor and landless peasants, which increasingly focused on leadership training, raising consciousness, and the creation of representative organisations.¹⁷ A broad informal education movement based on methods of liberation theology changed people's attitudes towards prevailing social and economic structures in ways not controlled by government.¹⁸ Under church protection and with international NGOs furnishing funds, social justice was incorporated into development programmes; and significantly, the first local human rights organisations were created.

Faced with faltering economic growth, with political authority eroded by increasingly autonomous organisations and in the context of growing guerrilla activities, governments perceived all NGO activity, but especially NGO rural development programmes, as a direct threat to national security. During the 1970s and 1980s, governments devised four distinct, yet complementary, policies—legal restrictions, repression, cooptation and the creation of competing associations—to control NGO activity. The four policies provide the essential framework for an analysis of UN and NGO relations in postwar Central America.

Legal restrictions. Normative frameworks to regulate the activities of not-for-profit associations are relatively underdeveloped compared to those applied to for-profit businesses. At various times in the 1970s, governments citing national security considerations justified legislation to control the activities of development organisations. For example, in 1976 the Salvadoran government passed the Law of Community Cooperation and Development to curb community development and leadership programmes through their inscription in a central register. In 1977 the Law of the Defense and Guarantee of Public Order was enacted, which determined that public order was disturbed by those 'maintaining relations with foreigners or foreign organizations in order to receive aid or instruction of any type'.¹⁹ In Guatemala, the impressive post-earthquake growth of the cooperative movement was shackled by the 1978 New Cooperative Law that effectively placed the cooperative movement under military control.²⁰

Elected civilian governments have applied legal instruments more deftly than their military predecessors. Legal registration (*personeria juridica*) has been removed from the national security framework and subjected to differentially applied procedures. The move away from high-profile blanket measures permits a more selective 'administrative' approach that allows expeditious processing for

'politically correct' organisations and obstructive handling for those considered politically dubious. For example, in El Salvador the Fundación Oriental Salvadoreña de Reconstrucción y Desarrollo Integral is an NGO created in 1992 to work with the National Reconstruction Plan. With the Salvadoran vice-president's father as the NGO's president, the application for legal registration was handled by the minister of the interior and approved two months after the NGO's foundation. In contrast, the Fundación para la Autogestión y Solidaridad de los Trabajadores Salvadoreños, (FASTRAS), created in 1987 to work with uprooted people, and considered an FMLN affiliated organisation,²¹ found its application stuck in a two-year procedural labyrinth, despite top-level mediation from the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) and the vice-president of the National Assembly.²²

The FASTRAS case is not an isolated example, and other NGOs working with civilian war victims have faced similar problems. These delays are significant because they hinder institutional development. While it was possible to survive without legal registration during wartime, the postwar context demands that NGOs normalise their affairs. Without legal registration NGOs cannot open their own corporate account, a prerequisite to meet new donor standards on transparency, accounting and accountability.

Repression. Physical attacks on NGOs started in the 1970s and the most severe repression targeted NGO beneficiary groups. Governments responded violently to the growth of peasant groups in El Salvador and to the expanding Guatemalan Cooperative movement. Self-help farmers' organisations were also systematically destroyed.²³ In the 1980s uprooted populations were methodically subjected to harassment, army abuses, disappearances and assassinations.²⁴ Four NGO types—human rights, training humanitarian and representative organisations of the uprooted—have been persistently targeted.

Governments have tried to destroy human rights NGOs since their creation. They have endured because of personal courage, the mix of financial, technical and political support received from international NGOs and survival strategies crafted to suit local conditions. For example, the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission and El Salvador's Tutela Legal operated under the umbrella of church protection, CODEH (Committee for the Defence of Human Rights in Honduras) in Honduras maintained an office and duplicate files in Mexico, and the Guatemala Human Rights Commission operated clandestinely from Mexico.²⁵ Pressure on training NGOs increased as open conflict erupted in the late 1970s. Rural training centres closed first—for example, the Salvadoran Foundation for Cooperative Promotion (FUNPROCOOP) training school in Nueva Concepción—followed by NGOs like the Labour Studies and Training Center, (CEDET) and the Education Support Institute, INDAE that focused on trade union education in El Salvador and Honduras, respectively.

Attention turned to representative organisations of uprooted populations once they formed in the late 1980s. For their advocacy of civilian rights and negotiated solutions to conflicts, members of the National Council of Displaced Guatemalans (CONDEG), the National Co-ordination of Guatemalan Widows

NAVIGUA) and the Christian Committee for the Displaced of El Salvador (PDES) were subjected to telephone death threats, break-ins, the publication of spaper death lists and assassination. In Guatemala, violent repression continued despite the election of civilian governments. During the 1990–1994 period, 11 CONDEG members disappeared or were murdered and its offices ransacked.²⁶ Similarly, NGOs attending to uprooted populations were harassed throughout the 1980s in an attempt to curtail their activities. Most survived because of strong international links and small, low budget, decentralised administrative operations; some, such as the Solaridad Committee with Central American Peoples, COSPUCA in Honduras, perished.²⁷ NGOs documenting and archiving issues related to uprooted populations were also intimidated because their infringement into policy areas considered the armed forces' preserve; the most infamous case was the murder of Myrna Mack, an NGO researcher in Guatemala.

Cooptation. The greater a government's application of repression, the more consequential the use of cooptation. Traditionally, Guatemalan and Salvadoran governments have not coopted NGOs to control them; an exception in El Salvador was an unsuccessful attempt led by USAID to bring CRS, the Mennonites and Save Children USA into the government's emergency programme. Cooptation was not fruitfully used by the Sandinista government.

Two basic preconditions existed in 1980s Nicaragua. The first was a broad resonance between government, local and international NGOs about the means of development; and the second was the NGO willingness to subject institutional priorities to official ones by working through two coordinating agencies—one a government department, the other representing Sandinista affiliated popular organisations. With this precedent established over the first two years, NGOs subsequently collaborated easily with the Sandinista government's humanitarian programme as the country slid into conflict.

The NGO ability to appreciate the political implications of the humanitarian situation was quickly overwhelmed, and as their capacity to intercede with the government weakened, their ability to act independently was eroded. A close association with the Sandinista cause led some NGOs to refrain from relief work for Nicaraguans fleeing as refugees to neighbouring countries. Moreover, as NGOs became instruments of government policy, they failed to realise how much humanitarian assistance was part of the government's counterinsurgency and pacification strategy.

Empowering NGOs. Two interrelated processes contributed to the growth in NGO numbers. A renaissance of grassroots organisations is evident, which was stimulated by donor focus on community-based development, a neoliberal ideology extolling self-help, and the advent of dynamic organisations of uprooted people that energised other marginal populations to reorganise. The process is most salient in El Salvador, where displaced groups accelerated the settlement movement by their links with urban squatter and cooperative organisations, and in Guatemala, where refugee repatriation has led to the

rejuvenation of production cooperatives, albeit as 'communal enterprises'. The grassroots revival has yet to reproduce the 1960s organisational density, but its significance clearly registered with Central American governments.

Mindful of the creative force represented by grass roots, political elites have devised a two-part strategy. While encouraging the arrival of US pentecostal church agencies, they have also organised their own NGOs. This process of elites forming NGOs is most developed in El Salvador and Guatemala. The Salvadoran business sector has created organisations through Fortalecimiento de Asociaciones FORTRAS, a USAID funded, the Salvadoran Foundation for Economic and Social Development FUSADES-located initiative.²⁸ In its first stage, FORTRAS supported the creation of organisations like the Business Fund for Educational Development, FEPADE, the Safety at Work Foundation, FIPRO, and Habitat, a housing foundation, capable of taking over government functions identified for privatisation. In its second stage, FORTRAS works with local business interests to create local development foundations as a counterweight to grassroots groups created bottom-up.²⁹ Private sector development foundations are closely connected to the governing National Republican Alliance (ARENA) party, facilitating movement of personnel into government and access to poverty funds from programmes like the social investment fund.

Guatemalan business interests have also created NGOs. But unlike El Salvador, where government's role was to encourage the private sector to create NGOs around the privatisation programme, the government in Guatemala has been directly involved in NGO creation, especially to execute micro-enterprise programmes.³⁰ The overall objective, however, is the same—the creation of enterprise culture NGOs to contest the associational space of those NGOs advocating empowerment.

As conflicts recede, the NGO community is characterised by fundamental contradictions. Though more numerous, the NGO community is more divided and heterogeneous. In many respects, its future is more uncertain than ever. A vibrant, initiative seizing sector of small, decentralised NGOs and grassroots groups, experienced in dealing with humanitarian issues, faces the challenge of acquiring skills to participate effectively in postwar reconstruction. Versed in human rights denunciation, human rights NGOs have to consider the strategies promoting a broader human rights agenda. Postwar political realignments within opposition forces test the ability of NGOs to achieve autonomy over policy, decision making and programming. It is precisely at this moment of transition that UN agencies identified NGO comparative advantage and began their efforts to get closer to them.

The evolving UN role in Central America

UN agencies traditionally provide technical assistance to line ministries. With few exceptions, notably UNHCR and UNICEF, UN agencies have lagged behind other official donors in their NGO relations. It was with the Partners in Development Program and the drafting of operational guidelines in 1988 that the UNDP created a framework for NGO relations. In the absence of a regional strategy, the regionwide evolution of UNDP-NGO relations has been patchy.³¹ Similarly, it was

only in 1991 that the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) adopted a policy permitting programme relations with NGOs that 'possess local perspectives on health issues, embody indigenous knowledge and mobilize poor people in health related activities'.³² Indeed, substantive NGO engagement was initiated by the UN's efforts outside the established agency system.

The UN's rapid task expansion in Central America into peacekeeping, peace-building and postwar reconstruction began in 1989.³³ The United Nations Observer Mission to verify the Electoral Process in Nicaragua (ONUVEN), the UN's first essay into verification of domestic elections in a sovereign state, was accompanied by the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA), which was established to verify security aspects of the Esquipulas Agreements. The UN Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) monitored human rights before the ceasefire—a significant advance over previous human rights reporting, which then served as the prototype in late 1994 for the UN's human rights verification mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA).

The UN's Special Economic Cooperation Plan (PEC) provided the framework for the International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA) and the Development Program for Refugees, Displaced and Repatriated Persons in Central America (PRODERE). Established to promote international assistance for refugees, repatriated and displaced persons in Mexico and Central America, CIREFCA evolved as a mechanism bringing together public agencies, national and international NGOs, official donors and beneficiary groups. With UNHCR as the lead agency, CIREFCA promoted projects and fundraising, disseminated information, and brought national refugee policies into line with accepted international standards.³⁴ PRODERE promoted the social and economic reintegration of more than two million uprooted people. The Italian government financed this five-year, \$115 million relief, rehabilitation and development programme. PRODERE operated regionwide, but it emphasised conflict zones in refugee expulsion countries. Executed by the UNDP's Office for Project Services and with institutional collaboration from the International Labour Office (ILO), PAHO and UNHCR, PRODERE was originally part of CIREFCA but soon evolved into an independent programme.

With their involvement in human rights, humanitarian assistance for repatriated refugees, relief and development programmes with uprooted persons—already established key areas of NGO activity—ONUSAL, CIREFCA and PRODERE have closely involved nongovernmental organisations. This was all the more the case for ONUSAL's and PRODERE's decentralised programmes, backed by substantial human, financial and logistical resources, and armed with specific, short-term, operational mandates. Moreover, ONUSAL, CIREFCA and PRODERE critically redefined the context in which NGOs operate. The discussion of their impact on NGO development is organised around four themes: displacement, opportunity generation, capacity-building, and legalisation.

Displacement. During the Salvadoran civil war, nongovernmental organisations were conspicuous as the only consistent reporters of human rights violations. The immediate effect of ONUSAL's human rights presence was to prevent

further human rights violations. But the anticipated strengthening of national NGOs and institutions to monitor and protect human rights did not occur. ONUSAL's human rights work effectively sidelined the human rights work of NGOs and the Catholic Church, and it failed to collaborate with these organisations to redefine their role in a postwar situation.³⁵ Similarly, PRODERE acted with scant concern for NGOs, especially during the programme's initial emergency stage. Nongovernmental organisations were not involved in the selection of priority regions where PRODERE chose to focus its activities with the result that, rather than see complementarity between its own and NGO activities, PRODERE tended to ignore the contributions of nongovernmental organisations familiar with its priority regions. Initial NGO participation was largely confined to subcontracting as executing agents, but not as partners with a view to enhancing NGO capacity and establishing project sustainability.

Opportunity generation. CIREFCA created opportunities for local NGOs to participate in refugee policy discussions that were instrumental in bringing the NGOs 'from the shadows to center stage'.³⁶ By their participation at CIREFCA international meetings and their critical involvement in the definition of country refugee strategies, NGOs demonstrated a deep understanding of assistance. Increased access to official donors confirmed NGOs as legitimate counterparts. Activities around CIREFCA also initiated a process of institutional expansion with the formation of national associations of NGOs working with uprooted people and the creation of a regional association, Asociación Regional para las Migraciones Forzadas, ARMIF. Joint activities served to strengthen communications between the UNHCR and NGOs, which had been strained earlier by differences over protection and repatriation policies.

The impact of PRODERE is more ambiguous. ARMIF is harshly critical of PRODERE, claiming it appropriated existing NGO structures and programmes.³⁷ Hyperbole notwithstanding, NGOs have a legitimate complaint about PRODERE's salary policy, which distorted local NGO salary scales and led to an exodus of NGO workers to better paid PRODERE jobs. However, over the short term, PRODERE has effectively helped to broker agreements between repatriated refugees in Guatemala and El Salvador and the respective education ministries to address long-standing grievances and incorporate teachers formed in the refugee camps into official education systems.

New spaces for participation also emerge from PRODERE's territorial planning approach. The creation, first of municipal planning committees to discuss community-level development priorities and subsequently departmental planning committees, has set in motion a series of processes permitting historically excluded populations to have a voice in setting priorities for community development. Similarly, the establishment of Local Health Systems (SIL.OS), Education Systems (SIL.ED) and Human Rights Systems (SIL.PRODEH) with across-the-board representation of all interested parties has opened additional spaces for participation where historically polarised actors meet to discuss and decide upon sector-specific and human rights issues. Through their active engagement in these arenas, many popular sector grassroots organisations have gained unpre-

cedented legitimacy. Yet institutional NGOs are circumspect about the new local participatory spaces. Though marginal to their creation, these NGOs are nevertheless key actors in their consolidation, which poses challenges to NGOs to assume new roles by working with municipal governments. This relationship had been anathema to NGOs and municipal governments alike; neither NGOs nor municipal governments were prepared for it.

Capacity building. Creating opportunity is not always accompanied by building capacity support. The scaling up of NGOs that resulted from increased funding through CIREFCA was not matched by training for institutional strengthening. PRODERE's capacity-building activities have also tended to target agencies created by PRODERE rather than existing NGOs. Strategic thinking about priorities for capacity-building has been lacking within PRODERE. For example, municipal planning committees depend on strong NGO-municipal relations; but it was in early 1995, just four months before PRODERE's close that the first seminar on NGO and local government relations took place in El Salvador. Even then PRODERE figured more as a funder than as the initiator of the initiative.³⁸

Capacity-building requires a long-term commitment of resources and sits uncomfortably within short-term operational interventions and their demand for immediate results. Institutions averse to risk also avoid capacity-building through 'learning by doing'. Thus, UNHCR selected an international NGO experienced with UNHCR accounting and reporting procedures to manage its Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) initiative in Nicaragua, thereby rejecting the alternative of investing in institutional training of local NGOs. UNHCR's practice of creating its own NGOs when it considers that there are no or too few reliable counterparts who can oversee opportunities for capacity-building. Furthermore, this practice can undermine existing NGOs already surviving with scarce legitimacy in a cash-strapped environment.

Faced with the problem of delivering assistance to repatriated Salvadoran refugees at a moment when existing NGOs had little credibility, UNHCR decided to create a dedicated NGO called the Salvadoran Integral Support Association (ASAI). Over the short term, existing NGOs were weakened, but over the longer term, as space opened up around the CIREFCA process, UNHCR began to work directly with NGOs representing the uprooted population, and ASAI itself became a respected, innovative and independent NGO.

Legalisation. As noted earlier, PRODERE played an important role legitimising NGO activities, but it was also key in obtaining their legal papers. By taking advantage of decentralisation policies that extended municipal legal powers, PRODERE acted as the catalyst through which many local NGOs and representative organisations working in PRODERE-designated priority areas have been legalised. Paradoxically, this is an indication of evolving consensus and reconciliation. In El Salvador, ARENA mayors granted legal status to grassroots groups representing populations inhabiting former guerrilla zones. Despite attempts to broaden the impact through training programmes that advise mayors concerning their legal powers to grant legal status, the real constraint has been the absence of a strong

external countervailing political force capable of mediating with mayors to exercise their authority in this area expeditiously, responsibly and prudently. Consequently, the significant efforts at normalising NGOs and associations institutionally have remained localised.

Collaboration over governance: an agenda for future action

As the special UN programmes end, UNDP will primarily be responsible for moving forward the UN-NGO partnership. It is sobering to recall here CIREFCA's lesson. The close NGO collaboration with UNHCR concerning humanitarian problems was not transferred to the UNDP's leadership of CIREFCA. Without smooth coordination among ONUSAL and UN organisations, there was a lack of synergy between ONUSAL's political, human rights and peace-building work and UN development efforts.³⁹ With little attention paid to working with national organisations that were capable of sustaining the progress made, ONUSAL may repeat the post-CIREFCA experience. Undoubtedly, there is a sustainability lesson here for MINUGUA.

PRODERE, however, leaves a solid framework for continued UN and NGO collaboration. The basis for future relations is the successful incorporation of social justice and human rights components into a recovery and rehabilitation programme. PRODERE has also prodded individual agencies into greater operational contact with NGOs. For example, PAHO has positioned itself to continue its work with SILOS and community-based health providers. In Guatemala specifically, full-time PAHO human resources have been relocated from Guatemala City to the departments as part of the institution's decentralisation policy.

Because of its close relations with Central American governments and its country offices and because the UNDP itself is rethinking its institutional mandate, it can position itself to play a significant role in bringing together governments and NGOs to discuss and exchange ideas about the promotion of participatory development. Prioritising NGO involvement in the development process is consistent not only with the UNDP's model of sustainable local human development, but also with the growing consensus about the importance of improved and broader stakeholder participation, which is understood as enhanced government ownership and beneficiary involvement in the design and execution of policies, programmes and projects. The pace and direction of progress will depend on the opportunities provided by a specific national context, but the vision and commitment of the UNDP resident representative in each country remains a key factor. In this respect, the first UNDP and NGO discussion on human development promotion in El Salvador was held in April 1994 and was a step towards creating greater mutual confidence and an opportunity to agree on work plans. Similarly, the UNDP has facilitated the first joint government, NGO and UNDP planning exercise in Honduras with the Human Development Program for Western Honduras, designed as the post-PRODERE programme.

However, with heightened attention paid to NGOs and as humanitarian NGOs adapt to different demands posed by postwar reconstruction, there is greater scrutiny of their comparative advantage. The small-scale nature of most NGO

activities is dwarfed by the magnitude of existing development problems. Conditioned by the experience acquired during their formative wartime years, many NGOs have been slow to meet new development challenges. Although the process of decentralisation now underway in most Central American countries has created new opportunities, few NGOs have taken advantage by entering into new and innovative partnerships with public sector institutions, especially local municipal governments.

Moreover, NGOs have been unable to enter into national development dialogues on economic and social policy and poverty reduction with the institutional weight, clarity and vision that is necessary to influence policy formulation and decision making over resource allocation. Although national NGOs are significant counterparts for international NGO and bilateral cooperation, they have not convinced sceptical national governments of their potential. Given the recent history of state and NGO relations, it is not surprising that NGOs have failed to contribute to national legislative and development policy debates by promoting institutional reforms that foster participatory development. Also, NGOs and beneficiary organisations have not become important channels for public resources, even when the public sector has a recognised incapacity to spend money.

Donor policies are critical. Dependence on external sources of funds has acted as a disincentive to NGOs that seek access to national public resources. The deep insertion of local NGOs into the project and policy-making processes of bilateral donors and international NGOs contrasts with their marginal role in channelling public resources and gaining access to national policy-makers. Central American governments have not been convinced about potential NGO contributions to development. NGOs have also not been challenged about their reluctance to modify confrontational stances to seek negotiated changes in development practice. The resulting situation is as discrepant over the short term, as it is unsustainable over the long term.

A gap between government and nongovernmental organisations clearly exists that acts as a major constraint on sustainable development and effective democratic practice. Collaboration with government brings uncertainties, including the risk that NGOs will compromise themselves and lose their independence. To ensure effective partnership, the NGO sector must be strengthened. There are three areas where UNDP involvement could strengthen the NGO sector.

First, existing regulatory frameworks need an urgent overhaul. In the absence of well defined and fastidiously implemented frameworks to regulate nongovernmental organisations without compromising their activities, they are unable to develop institutionally. Ill defined and arbitrarily applied regulations also stifle initiative and act as a disincentive to forming new associations. Without attention to this critical issue, civic action is in danger of emasculation that results in the atrophy of local associations. There are dangers involved in any attempt at regulatory reform, as shown by experience in other parts of the world where amendments to normative frameworks are introduced as much to control NGOs as to enhance their development capacity. However, PRODERE's support for NGO legalisation in Central America has set a precedent in this delicate area. UNDP should take this work forward, implementing strategies to collaborate jointly with governments and nongovernmental organisations, and create fair and

transparent NGO regulatory frameworks that afford equal priority to those developed for the profit sector.⁴⁰ Working collaboratively with government takes on particular importance in states that ascribe limited urgency to regulating associational economic and social activity. The work initiated by the Commonwealth Foundation is indicative of the type of process that could be applied in Central America.⁴¹ Guidelines for good policy and practice were produced after a series of regional consultations, feedback on earlier drafts and workshops.⁴² Apart from their ratification by Commonwealth NGOs, these guidelines hold the potential of being incorporated into mainstream government thinking and of becoming benchmarks for assessing NGO and governmental relations.

Second, the diversity and pluralism of NGOs in Central America, which have contributed to civil society's reawakening, must work in favour of good development. Donor agencies face a real dilemma. By equating the number of nongovernmental organisations with the deepening of democratisation, the result is a large and varied number of small, weak and under-resourced groups, whose contribution to development is often negligible and whose presence precipitates the erosion of necessary state development efforts when government responsibilities are jettisoned in favour of the NGO sector. The collective impact of small-scale NGO activities was demonstrated during the war years, when the proliferation of small NGOs and grassroots groups that emerged by guaranteeing the delivery of emergency assistance to communities of uprooted people eroded repressive state authority, as governments failed in their attempts to close the spaces for humanitarian action.

In postwar conditions, however, NGO fragmentation is a liability when it prevents the organisation of strong representative bodies to promote their collective interests and is a barrier to programme coordination. Fragmented NGO sectors hinder the effectiveness of resource-starved NGO associations. With their narrow membership base, NGO associations are unable to play an influential role in creating real commitment to greater coordination at the programme level. Individual NGO development efforts therefore have limited localised benefits at best, and are likely to be plagued by the competition between small-scale, socially and economically unsustainable projects.⁴³

An important UNDP contribution therefore lies in mobilising donor support for strengthening NGO representational and advocacy capacity and in supporting the creation of frameworks for coordination between NGOs as well as between them and government. With its permanent in-country presence, UNDP could also play an important monitoring role reporting to donors on the broad trends affecting NGO evolution and advising donors on the wider development consequences of their specific NGO funding. Such roles would demand that UNDP builds adequate capacity with respect to its understanding of NGO roles in governance.

Third, NGOs have to democratise more by deepening their relations with their beneficiaries. Wartime conditions were not conducive to the organisation of time-consuming and expensive consultations. Difficult access was a barrier to quick and effective communication and information sharing. Benefits do accrue from involving beneficiaries, and organisations that give priority to this dimension are strengthened.⁴⁴ Postwar conditions thus demand NGOs and donors reappraise policies. Funding for beneficiary meetings and newsletters can help

to improve NGO accountability. Whatever one's political views, the annual of Nicaragua's Sandino Foundation (FACS) is a useful opportunity for NGOs to shape institutional policy, report on the impact of programmes on their beneficiary networks. Regular consultations further legitimise NGOs as institutions able to speak for a wide constituency. In contrast, significant restructuring and policy changes without beneficiary consultation can only weaken NGO credibility. The numerous Salvadoran NGOs undergoing on-the-scenes organisational changes as a result of the fallout from the debates within the opposition set a poor example of transparency and integrity in practice. Consequently, nongovernmental organisations project themselves as party entities more concerned about politics than organisations committed to providing benefits to a constituency with a voice in determining institutional policies and programmes.

Conclusion

The NGO sector in Central America is at a critical juncture. Its ability to weather the conflicts of the 1980s as a robust and growing sector is a display of its strength and durability. As the NGO sector manoeuvres to deal with the challenges of postwar recovery and democratisation, it must address critical challenges. After two decades of confrontation with the state, nongovernmental organisations are not fully prepared to deal with the processes that are increasingly propelling them into collaborative situations with governments. Without concerted support to strengthen NGO sectors through legalisation, enhanced institutional capacity, effective coordination and greater accountability, there is a risk that NGOs will be unable to realise their potential contribution to development and democratisation.

The United Nations system plays a key role in supporting NGO institutionalisation; and in helping to direct associational energies into policy making, and ensuring that the state perform better. But in assisting NGOs to meet these new challenges, the UN system and the UNDP specifically must also change. The UN's programmes show how UN organisations can significantly affect NGOs, even when they are not directly working with them. If the UN system is to remain an effective advocate for people's participation in the decisions that affect their lives and in government responsiveness, it will need to reposition itself with respect to the state. To play a role as arbiter successfully, the United Nations system should become less of an extension of government and more an agent of civil society within government; it should be less tied to the provision of sectoral technical assistance and more capable and adept at influencing the creation and shape of policy environments encouraging and facilitating the participation of all development actors. Unless these issues are addressed, a true partnership comprising equal members is unlikely to emerge.

* I would like to thank Mary Anderson, L David Brown and Caroline Moser as well as participants in the INS workshop on Nongovernmental Organizations, the United Nations and Global Governance for comments on an earlier draft. The author accepts the usual responsibilities.

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- ² A fine survey of political developments is found in James Dunkerley, *The Pacification of Central America*, London: Verso, 1994.
- ³ Richard Fagen, 'The politics of transition', in R Fagen, C Deere and J L Corragio (eds), *Transition and Development*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1986.
- ⁴ The concept of the 'rationality of distrust', developed by Gerrit Huijzer to explain the motivation for peasants' lack of participation in community development projects in 1950s El Salvador is still relevant today. See Gerrit Huijzer, *Peasant Rebellion in Latin America*, London: Penguin, 1973.
- ⁵ According to the UN secretary-general's 1994 report on Nicaragua, 75% of Nicaraguan families live below the poverty line, with 44% in extreme poverty. See *International Assistance for the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Nicaragua: Aftermath of the War and Natural Disasters*, report of the secretary-general, 49th Session of the General Assembly, item 23. Nicaragua's acute situation is not unique; the number of Hondurans living in poverty increased from 67% to 73% between 1989 and 1992. See Dunkerley, *The Pacification of Central America*, p 18. Also see UNDP, *Human Development Report 1990*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1990 and; UNDP, *Human Development Report 1992*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- ⁶ Under the EDUCO project, there are now 1700 community managed schools with over 70 000 pre- and primary school children in the poorest municipalities. See World Bank, *El Salvador: The Challenge of Poverty Reduction*, Washington: World Bank, 1994.
- ⁷ AVANESO-IDSAC, ONGs, *Sociedad Civil y Estado en Guatemala: Elementos para el Debate*, Guatemala: mimeo, 1989.
- ⁸ IDSAC, SERJUS & SOJUGMA, *El Fenomeno de las ONGs en Guatemala*, Guatemala: mimeo, 1990.
- ⁹ CAPRI, *Directorio ONG de Nicaragua*, Managua: CAPRI, 1990.
- ¹⁰ UNDP, *Directorio de Instituciones Privadas de Desarrollo de El Salvador*, UNDP: San Salvador, 1992.
- ¹¹ In 1988 European and North American NGOs channelled between \$200 and \$250 million to Central America. See Eric Holt, *Las ONGs y la crisis centroamericana*, Managua: Cries, 1988; in 1992 European NGOs alone were spending an estimated \$180 to \$200 million in the region. See Kees Biekart, *La Cooperacion No-Gubernamental Europea hacia Centroamerica: La Experiencia de los Ochenta y las Tendencias en los Noventa*, San Salvador: PRISMA, 1994. These figures represent a two-fold increase from the early 1980s, when according to the author's own estimates, European funding was between \$100 and \$130 million.
- ¹² The figures on NGO poverty spending come from World Bank, *BICOR on Development NGOs in Honduras*, Washington: mimeo, 1989. The Honduran Social Fund is scheduled to spend \$23 million annually over the 1995-1998 period.
- ¹³ Cristina Equizabal, David Lewis, Larry Minear, Peter Sollis & Tom Weiss, *Humanitarian Challenges in Central America: Learning the Lessons of Recent Armed Conflicts*, Occasional Paper No 14, Providence, RI: Watson Institute, 1993.
- ¹⁴ Peter Sollis, 'Displaced persons and human rights: the crisis in El Salvador', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 11(1), 1992, pp 49-67.
- ¹⁵ H Blumstein, E Betters, J Cobb, J Leonard & C Townsend, *Area Handbook for El Salvador*, Washington DC: American University Press, 1971.
- ¹⁶ Government commitment to welfare spending was always fragile. The Salvadoran government built health centres only under US pressure to comply with Alliance for Progress ideals, pressure that infuriated the oligarchy, who protested to the US Ambassador. See Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America*, New York: Norton, 1984 p 174.
- ¹⁷ Beyond its 'option for the poor', the critical issue of liberation theology was the activity it engendered to transform the poor from passive bystanders into active participants in their own development. See for example, Carlos Cabarrus, *Genesis de Una Revolucion: Analisis del Surgimiento y Desarrollo de la Organizacion Campesina en El Salvador*, Mexico DF: Ediciones de la Casa Chata, 1983.
- ¹⁸ Between 1967 and 1974, 11 Christian-oriented rural training centres were established in El Salvador, espousing the 'training of pastoral agents of, and for, rural areas in the spirit of renovation outlined by Vatican II'. See Secretariado Social Interdiocesano, *Guia de Entidades de Inspiracion Cristiana que Promueven el Desarrollo*, San Salvador: mimeo, 1975. A similar expansion of training centres occurred elsewhere in Central America. See Philip Berryman, *The Religious Roots of Rebellion*, London: SCM Press, 1984.
- ¹⁹ James Dunkerley, *The Long War: Dictatorship and Revolution in El Salvador*, London: Junction Books, 1982.
- ²⁰ Centro de Estudios e Investigaciones para Guatemala (CEIG), *Contrainsurgencia y Desarrollo Rural en Guatemala 1965-1985*, Mexico: CEIG, 1986.
- ²¹ General Accounting Office (GAO), *El Salvador: Role of Nongovernment Organisations in Postwar Reconstruction*, Washington, DC: GAO, 1992.
- ²² FASTRAS first applied for legalisation in April 1991. A routine procedure turned into a bureaucratic nightmare when a discretionary clause was used to send the application to seven government ministries and agencies

for their comments. The application was returned to I-ASTRAS by the Interior Ministry for modifications. A second application was submitted in February 1992. This time the Interior Ministry approved the papers and passed them to the Minister of the Presidency for final approval by the President of the Republic. The application then got stuck in the Minister of the Presidency's office for over a year with no explanation for the delay. See 'En busca de la Personería Jurídica', *Desarrollo Integral*, 5, June 1993, pp 32–33.

²³ Integrated rural development programmes that were a common feature of the development landscape in the 1970s had disappeared by 1980. Such programmes taught improved agricultural techniques, soil conservation, health, hygiene and literacy. El Salvador was organised by the Catholic Church and funded by international NGOs. Participants abandoned the scheme over the 1979–1980 period when the National Guard began killing leaders, hacking them to death and leaving them as a warning. See Raymond Bonner, *Weakness and Deceit*, New York: Times Books, 1984, pp 83–84. The destruction of integrated development programmes in Guatemala is chronicled in CEIG, *Contrainsurgencia*, and Shelton Davis & Julie Hodgson, *Witness to Political Violence in Guatemala: The Destruction of a Rural Development Movement*, Boston, MA: Oxfam America, 1982.

²⁴ For example, see Iain Guest & Diane Orentlicher, *Honduras: A Crisis on the Border*, New York: Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights, 1985; and Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights, *El Salvador's Other Victims: The War on the Displaced*, New York: Americas Watch and Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights, 1984.

²⁵ The Guatemala Human Rights Commission operated underground, since previous attempts to start a Human Rights Commission had ended in the murder and disappearance of the organisers. A Guatemala office was finally opened in early 1995, some 15 years after the commission's foundation.

²⁶ Anne Manuel, Human Rights Watch/Americas & Greta Tovar Siebentritt, *Human Rights in Guatemala during President de Leon Carpio's First Year*, New York: Human Rights Watch, 1994, pp 80–85.

²⁷ Sollis, 'Displaced persons'; and Equizabal *et al*, *Humanitarian Challenges*.

²⁸ The USAID factor is important here since FUSADES itself is a USAID funded, private sector organisation that as the think tank of the ARENA party created the current neoliberal policy framework.

²⁹ The first was FUNDECOTOYO, the Development Foundation of Tepecoyo, founded by 55 members, the majority coffee producers. See Herman Rosa, *El Papel de la Asistencia de AID en el Fortalecimiento de Nuevas Instituciones del Sector Privado y en la Transformación Global de la Economía Salvadoreña: El caso de FUSADES*, paper delivered at the XVII IASA Congress, Los Angeles, September 1992.

³⁰ IDESAC *et al*, *El Fenómeno*.

³¹ In 1991, even with the guidelines in place, the resident representative in El Salvador was mindful of the stricture about entering into relations with NGOs not approved by the government. Before the peace accords, the UNDP did not have good contacts with one of the most important development actors. The responsibility for NGO liaison was given to a junior official who also dealt half-time with Belize. The error of this policy still cuts across UNDP and NGO relations today.

³² PAHO, *Collaboration between Governments and Non-Governmental Organizations: A Proposal to Establish New Precedents for Health Care in the Americas*, Washington DC: mimco, 1991.

³³ S Neil MacFarlane & Thomas G Weiss, 'The United Nations, regional organisations and human security: building theory in Central America', *Third World Quarterly*, 2, 1994, pp 277–295.

³⁴ Adolfo Aguilar Zinser, CURECA, *The Promises and Reality of the International Conference on Central American Refugees*, Washington, DC: Hemispheric Migration Project, 1991.

³⁵ David Holiday & William Stanley, 'Building the peace: preliminary lessons from El Salvador', *Journal of International Affairs*, 46(2), 1993, pp 415–438.

³⁶ Sergio Aguayo, *From the Shadows to Center Stage: NGOs and Central America Refugee Assistance*, Washington, DC: Hemispheric Migration Project, 1991.

³⁷ ARMIF, *Reflexiones Generales del Proceso PRODERF en Centroamérica desde La Perspectiva de las ONGs*, mimeo, Managua 1994.

³⁸ PRODERF was only one of four donors and the seminar was organised by the Fundación Salvadoreña de Apoyo Integral (FUSAI), with technical support from CHLCADEL.

³⁹ Equizabal *et al*, *Humanitarian Challenges*, p 51.

⁴⁰ To date, most multilateral activity concerning legal reform has focused on legal and regulatory frameworks governing economic life. The World Bank, for example, has focused on countries in transition from command to market economies with support for enactment of privatisation, banking, bankruptcy and commercial laws, etc. With attention focused on the private for-profit sector, little, if any, concern has been paid to the framework governing NGO activity despite the expressions of support for the NGO sector. The stark imbalance between efforts supporting private business and the absence of activities supporting NGO development, despite protestations about NGO importance in development, is found in World Bank, *Governance: The World Bank's Experience*, Washington DC: World Bank, 1994.

⁴¹ Personal communication from Ian Smillie.

⁴² Commonwealth Foundation, *Non-Governmental Organisations: Guidelines for Good Policy and Practice*, London: Commonwealth Foundation, 1995.

⁴³ An example from El Salvador illustrates the general problems faced. It concerns an NGO-organised project to renovate coffee plantations with the potential to produce organic coffee for export. The beneficiaries are squatters awaiting land title, so uncertainty clouds their future. Despite agreements on areas apt for renovation and those most suited to subsistence crop cultivation, large areas of steep mountainside have been cleared of coffee bushes for maize cultivation. The decision to break the coffee agreement was made after a second NGO approached the farmers with an offer of subsidised credit for maize and beans cultivation. Unable to think long-term, the farmers took advantage of short-term opportunities. The future of organic coffee production is now uncertain. The only certainty is that there will be four or five good maize harvests until the topsoil is completely washed away.

⁴⁴ The Community Development Councils of Morazan and San Miguel enjoyed a strong mandate because of its foundation in 1988 at a meeting of 156 delegates representing 25 000 uprooted people.

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NGO participation in the international policy process

LEON GORDENKER & THOMAS G WEISS

When viewed from the central vantage point of the United Nations (UN), each of the case studies above produces significant evidence that nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) have joined states as participants in organised international relations. At the same time, the principal participants in making policies and executing programmes in the international institutions in the UN realm remain government representatives. In each of the case studies, a complex set of equations emerges in which the variables are NGOs, intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) and governments.

Simple reference to these three categories of participants has a superficial and misleading quality. Day-to-day work is accomplished by people who, it can be assumed, have a variety of instructions or none at all from their governments or organisations. Relationships between NGOs and the United Nations vary from distant and indirect in the case of grassroots organisations to virtual equality in some human rights activities. In some instances, as in *Partners in Action (PARINAC)*, mentioned by Cyril Ritchie in his essay on coalitions of organisations, the participation of NGOs as executing agencies is eagerly sought by an IGO, in this case the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), acting on behalf of governments. In other cases, as in the creation of environmental policies, as illustrated by Ken Conca, NGO participation has barely begun. Similarly, in the case of AIDS, described by Christer Jönsson and Peter Söderholm, NGOs participated in framing the epidemic as an international issue but had little direct role at the global level in managing programmes.

At the same time, in quantitative terms without reference to the character and aims of NGOs associated with the UN complex, the sheer numbers have mounted steadily and will likely stay at a high level. Moreover, the fact of mounting numbers has led—as suggested in the essay on coalitions, and in the case of Central America examined by Peter Sollis—to the creation of specialized meta-organisations. Yet the precise purposes of such coalitions, their membership and their relationships with IGOs and governments vary widely.

Reflections on theoretical approaches

Such descriptive conclusions only strengthen the scepticism expressed at the outset of this volume on the usefulness of conventional theoretical approaches to NGOs. The case studies describe nongovernmental organisations that challenge governments and their intergovernmental creations, even as these NGOs work parallel with governments and other NGOs that, in some respects, operate almost seamlessly with governments. Moreover, the attitude and actions of governments

with respect to NGOs are hardly amenable to conventional strategic, zero-sum-based analyses that emphasise the power of competing states. It would make little sense, for instance, to attribute the activities of NGOs in Central America to the presumably overwhelming power of the United States. Nor would it explain much about human rights organisations to insist that their role is ultimately explained in the same manner.

Yet in varying magnitudes, states dispose of the most effective and far-reaching administrative apparatuses on earth. Both IGOs and NGOs, which for the sake of argument are assumed to be independent, usually need at least acquiescence from the state apparatus to operate effectively and reach goals. Governments engage IGOs to organise some of their cooperative common ventures, contributing funds as well as administrative capacities. Usually governments can ultimately open the way to, or suppress, NGO and IGO activities. Consequently, much activity attempts to convince governmental representatives at home and in IGO settings to take seriously, defer to, or follow NGO propositions.

In fact, all the case studies touch on a range of relationships between governments and NGOs. These are sometimes hierarchical, where governments exercise control over NGOs. As for IGOs, the fundamental effect on nongovernmental organisations has to do with access, which has become progressively broader and deeper. IGOs can also employ control by denial of, for instance, information or sometimes finances. Thus, many collaborative and cooperative relationships that mute conflicts between NGOs, governments and IGOs emerge from the case studies.

These findings support the proposition that a social approach and in particular interorganisation theory offers a promising way to understand the NGO phenomenon better. Further work would develop deeper information on how NGOs are constructed and how they operate. Interorganisation theory emphasises the quality of contact among NGOs through their personnel and among distinct policy and activity sectors; it does not assume a monolithic character of governments and IGOs. It makes identification of leaders and their organisational roles easier. In discussing NGO activity on AIDS, Jönsson and Söderholm explicitly use this approach to disclose the complexity and dynamism of relationships between NGOs and global IGO activity.

However, much remains to be done to approach a comprehensive theory of NGOs, either along social lines or from some other direction. The case studies here provide information and insights in that direction but, as anticipated, fall short of full explanation or observation of this tangled web of transnational relationships.

Dimensions

However remote, any general, testable theoretical approaches to NGOs may be, the case studies have developed much information that fills out the scheme of organisational dimensions set out in the introductory essay. At the same time, the studies show that much is still obscure and that some glaring gaps remain. The following pages point out some of the main findings.

Organisational dimensions

Nongovernmental organisations clearly operate in every geographic range from the community to the transnational. In discussing scaling up and scaling down, Peter Uvin calls attention to the impulses among NGOs to bridge several ranges. To a considerable degree, this bridging is related to the governmental contacts that NGOs seek and employ. Some NGOs, as Sollis's article on Central America suggests, have a regional range and connect with those at national and subnational levels. Conca points out, however, that few environmental organisations relevant to UN activities are truly transnational.

Data on the support base of NGOs is not highly developed in the case studies. Whether and how differences in organisational membership influence policy activities remains unclear. Democratic government of NGOs is an issue referred to in several case studies, but its effect is far from defined. In her essay on the women's movement, Martha Chen calls attention to the increasing number of women who attend the international conferences on women, although individual voluntary attendance and organisational representation are not quantified separately.

On the related subject of finances, Andrew Natsios identifies in his essay on humanitarian work a wide variation among NGOs, some of which refuse governmental funds, while others, including the new breed of 'super' NGOs, may be almost totally financed from public funds from governments and intergovernmental organisations. In the USA, legal rules provide that a nongovernmental organisation must raise 20% of its finances from private sources to be eligible for public funding. Nevertheless, some have grown to mega-proportions for this universe. Some NGO coalitions, as Ritchie describes in his essay on coordination, depend on IGOs for financing. Brief notice in several essays to philanthropic foundations implies the presence of endowment income, but few NGOs other than those mentioned appear to draw much from this source. Many of the essays mention contracting with governments and IGOs in the UN cluster as sources of finances for a set of nongovernmental organisations that deliver specific services.

Legal relationships affect NGOs in many ways. IGO regulations, dealt with by Antonio Donini in his essay on the UN bureaucracy, and by Ritchie, clearly affect access by NGOs. This relationship is especially highlighted in the case study by Conca on environmental organisations. Moreover, nongovernmental organisations can be inhibited or encouraged in their work at the community and national levels by the nature of local laws, as is noted by Sollis in his essay on state-UN-NGO relationships in Central America. The character of legal relationships between NGOs and other organisations clearly can be a focus of activity, as for example in the case of the environment, the status of women, and in the economic development field.

Several of the essays agree that the professionalism of personnel serving NGOs, especially those that have close relationships with the headquarters activities of IGOs, has risen markedly. This is also supported by the attention given by IGO personnel to NGOs in dealing with AIDS and with women's issues. Donini's examples of 'revolving door' personnel—people who move between intergov-

ernmental and nongovernmental staffs—argue that professional standards in some NGOs and IGOs are equivalent.

Other findings related to personnel remain fragmentary. Although the use of research personnel in NGOs with technical, scientific or legal interests would seem indispensable, it remains hard to estimate either quantity or quality. Felice Gaer's essay on human rights, and the treatment of environmental organisations by Conca, give evidence of the payoff from high quality advance preparation for participation by NGOs in UN system meetings. The creation of intermediary organisations in Central America and in scaling up operations examined by Sollis and Uvin would appear to aim directly at employment of skilled personnel, either of a research or operational character.

Precisely how volunteers fit into NGOs in touch with the UN system remains rather obscure, even in the essays that speak of grassroots organisations and movements that go beyond defined NGO boundaries. By definition, grassroots organisations depend on voluntary participation. Such participation may extend to more upscale NGOs, at least in terms of boards of trustees. Membership organisations presumably have devices for representation of members, suggesting voluntary participation. Voluntary participation, moreover, has a close relationship with processes within NGOs. This is supposedly a precondition for accreditation to the Economic and Social Council of the UN (ECOSOC). Any generalisation about these issues, however, would depend on examination of NGO internal operations, and is beyond the scope of these essays.

Financing has a fundamental importance in the development of the mega-NGOs referred to by Natsios that operate in humanitarian emergencies. Much of this comes directly from governments and some comes via IGOs. Similar financing sources are evident in the Central American NGO picture developed by Sollis. In the AIDS field analysed by Jönsson and Söderholm, governments are the overwhelming source of funding for IGO programmes, but NGOs appear to operate to some extent on other financial bases. The women's movement, described by Chen, seems to be largely privately financed. How or whether endowments, except in the case of philanthropic foundations, figure in NGO financing is also not clear. As for income derived as compensation, with the spread of contracting for NGO services, this can be taken as an important channel for the specific transfer of financial resources.

Governance dimensions

Most NGOs probably exist to influence, to set direction for, or to maintain functions of governance or to operate where government authority does not. Consequently governance dimensions would be a strong presence in any inquiry about them. This is, in fact, the case in all of the studies. Donini points out that NGOs have even developed some roles in regard to the former diplomatic preserve of maintaining international peace and security.

In any case, NGOs are a strong presence at every contact point for transnational governance. Their presence differs, however, in specific areas. International conferences, as is shown in the cases of AIDS, the environment, human rights, women and humanitarian assistance, offer an entrance to deeper contacts

between NGOs and the UN organisations. Some NGOs, equipped with expert knowledge and professional leadership, participate with special zeal and effect in the preparatory phases of such conferences. To some degree, NGO efforts at every stage shape the outcomes.

The global conferences both affect the agendas of intergovernmental agencies and are convened by them. The NGO presence and activity around the conferences convened by the United Nations and associated agencies is reconfirmed by the case studies. Donini calls attention to the changing environment for such association, while Ritchie makes it clear that many coalitions form and continue for the specific purpose of clamping NGOs and IGOs into a relationship with a set agenda.

Although the case studies focus on the UN agencies, national governments are never allowed to drift far from view. Gaer shows how the UN human rights organs provide a way for NGOs to embellish a critical and often adversarial relationship with national governments. Sollis discloses how NGOs working with IGOs have a virtually integral role in national governments in some instances in Central America, where a regional concept is also important. NGOs also seek contact, or cannot avoid it, with subnational governmental units, a point that is clear from both Natsios's and Uvin's discussions. In failed states, moreover, as Natsios's essay makes clear, NGOs take on some normal governmental programmes but not without misgivings about the propriety and result of such lack of normal contact with local authority. The frequent mention of grassroots organisation points to a community-level relationship for some NGOs.

Informal transnational relationships between NGO personnel and that of governments and IGOs is implicitly or explicitly demonstrated in all the case studies. It is especially emphasised in the case of the women's movement and AIDS. Since the governance dimensions are intended to highlight the variety of relationships between NGOs and authority, a variety of activities engaging the latter were set out. These include norm and policy setting, policy execution, contracting and inter-level mediation. In none of these are NGOs missing, although the depth and temporal extent of the contact vary greatly. For instance, Gaer and Chen show the constant and growing presence of NGOs in setting norms related to human and women's rights, while Conca's discussion of environmental agencies demonstrates a special density of contact during the norm-setting global conferences. Sollis reveals the involvement of NGOs in execution of policy. NGOs serving as contractors are engaged in the humanitarian activities discussed by Natsios. Ritchie's comments on coalitions and Uvin's analysis of scaling up and scaling down both have to do with NGOs related to interlevel mediation.

Strategic dimensions

Strategic dimensions supplement the data about governance dimensions by emphasising what is sought and what techniques are employed by NGOs in their relationships with various authorities engaged in governance processes.

As for goals, many and probably most of the NGOs in the case studies either concentrate on a single issue or a set of issues grouped around a particular topic. Gaer, for example, takes up some transnational human rights organisations that

deal with no other subjects. At the same time, Gaer mentions representatives at the Vienna human rights conference with wider, multisectoral or broad social goals. In international cooperation on AIDS, Jönsson and Söderholm observe that some participating NGOs concentrate on persons with AIDS, while others aim at the position of homosexuals in society generally. In humanitarian emergencies, Natsios points to NGOs that aim narrowly at humanitarian relief or refugee issues in the short term, while others emphasise the continuum from relief to economic development that involves multisectoral approaches. Some of these organisations are church-related, and they define their aims in that light.

Both on women's issues, dealt with by Chen, and on arrangements for economic development, taken up by Uvin, some NGOs define their goals in terms of social ideology. For some feminists, wholesale changes in society are the goal, while some of the NGOs sponsoring grassroots development groups seek substantial changes in dominant economic structures.

Organisations that oppose the United Nations or the treatment of global issues by means of intergovernmental cooperation are unlikely to be visible in case studies focused on topics on the UN agenda. Yet it may be assumed that such organisations exist or that some NGO experience would lead to deep disillusion and therefore general opposition. These would be covered in a revolutionary/rejectionist dimension. Some hints of such NGO aims occur in Uvin's essay, and by implication in Sollis's queries about the future of NGO programmes in Central America. Jönsson and Söderholm note that some AIDS activist NGOs find it difficult to cope with the UN milieu; they may well come to oppose both international programmes and policy making.

The case studies provide examples of every type of tactical mode in NGO strategy with regard to the United Nations and other authority. Probably a fair estimate would be that around UN headquarters and those of associated agencies advocacy/lobbying are the primary modes. Human rights activities analysed by Gaer provide a clear and familiar example. The coalitions described by Ritchie adopt a similar tactical mode, which also characterises NGO tactics at the global conferences on women and on the environment analysed by Chen and Conca.

The more passive monitoring mode is less visible than the positive tactic of advocacy/lobbying. It means following in an expert or at least informed manner the developments related to topics of particular interest to an NGO. All NGOs that concentrate on intergovernmental contacts and international conferences sponsored by the United Nations and associated agencies use the monitoring mode. Although the essays here provide little direct data on monitoring, it can be taken for granted in combination with the activities reported. In fact, Gaer's discussion of human rights indicates that intergovernmental organisations rely on the monitoring capacities of such independent NGOs as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. It is clearly also implied with regard to women's NGOs and coalitions described by Chen and Ritchie. On other governance lines, the frequency of monitoring is less certain, but the Sollis and Uvin essays give attention to intermediary organisations that could monitor UN activities on behalf of NGOs, but are unequipped to do so.

Mass propaganda and its specialised form, mass demonstrations, do not figure prominently in many of the case studies. Public reporting of human rights

violations by NGOs may reach a wide audience and could be part of a mass propaganda programme, as hinted by Gaer, while reporting by environmental organisations, according to Conca, has a similar character. Women's organisations, too, have used such devices as the international tribunal reported by Chen. In these cases, mass communications media constitute an intervening organisational factor. This is not treated in the essays and in general poses difficult problems of description and analysis, which could be the nucleus of further specialised research.

A few single-issue NGOs concentrating on AIDS have used mass demonstrations to attempt to affect international conferences. The large presence of NGOs at the UN Conference on Environment and Development and at the women's conference could be viewed as mild mass demonstrations. In fact, showy mass demonstrations may only rarely be possible in international meetings; they could be easier to mount for local and national authorities, although this too is more a hypothesis than a finding.

Output dimensions

If strategic dimensions help disclose NGO relationships with authority, the output dimensions point in the direction of receivers of ultimate products, beneficiaries or end users. These dimensions tend markedly to reinforce each other and to overlap. One of the output dimensions, political feedback among governmental units, refers to the sometimes circuitous routes whereby the results of monitoring efforts and advocacy/lobbying are put before NGO membership and used in attempts to affect the policies of local or national authorities. This feedback process connects the decision-making in the UN system with that of national and local governments.

Because of its circuitousness, the process is difficult to trace, but the belief in its existence is manifest in the activities of NGOs in the human rights, women's movement and AIDS fields. Sollis provides data on how regional intermediary organisations in Central America affect governmental decisions in the region. Similar incidents are reported by Donini and Natsios.

Information, developed by NGOs of every persuasion, is stock in trade for them in looking towards ultimate consumers. It is a basic tool of political feedback in, for instance, the promotion of human rights as described by Gaer. A specialised use of information is in providing expert advice, noted in Chen's essay on women's movements, and is a standby of development NGOs at country sites. Other NGOs offer expert advice on the formation of grassroots organisations.

The case studies illustrate many instances of attempts to mobilise opinion by encouraging leadership. This is a significant function of intermediary organisations and an outcome sought by NGO participation in international conferences. The NGO activity in Central America, referred to by Sollis, in part had this aim. It is also a possible spin-off from the humanitarian activities analysed by Natsios, and is closely related to coalition-formation among NGOs described by Ritchie.

Nongovernmental organisations furnish material goods in humanitarian relief situations and in development activities, as illustrated in the studies by Natsios,

Sollis and Uvin. As mentioned earlier, this output is the mainstay of most NG budgets. In humanitarian relief, large-scale distribution of material goods may occur, while in economic development the amounts are likely to be limited by the scale of projects, particularly by NGOs that tend to work in communities on a small scale. NGOs also furnish material goods to each other in small amounts in the course of encouragement of networks and education of specific publics. Although the case studies do not take up this activity specifically, it is known that much trading of published materials among NGOs takes place, especially during intermediary functions and large gatherings. This was certainly the case with the women's movement and with human rights NGOs during the major gatherings documented by Chen and Gaer.

All NGOs implicitly encourage the creation of networks. This is quite explicit in the formation of the coalitions described by Ritchie and others. It was a by-product of the formal organising in Central America described by Sollis. Participation in global conferences, described by Conca and Chen, has this same effect. The human rights NGOs are old hands at trading information, a defining function of networks. Similar network-building was a prominent feature of NGO participation in transnational AIDS cooperation analysed by Jönsson and Söderholm.

Networking may link to education of specific publics. In this activity, NGOs seek to put before selected persons, such as senior officials of a bureaucracy, or business leaders in a country or a community, basic information about the subjects with which they are concerned. The implicit goal is to raise the level of knowledge so that informed discourse can follow. Gaer and Chen demonstrate how well human rights NGOs and those involved with women's rights use this technique. Some NGOs are known deliberately to seek to inform academic audiences, although little evidence emerges from the case studies. With the education of members of a specific public, the possibility of further informal contact is heightened.

Negative potentials

The case studies as a whole suggest a vast range of energetic activities by nongovernmental organisations in many sectors of human life, whether dominated by the state apparatus or left to civil society. NGOs keep in touch with each other by attenuated lines of communication and informal networks, some of which extend into governments and intergovernmental agencies. In international cooperation around the UN system, the case studies distinguish a large variety of dynamic practices and relationships. None of the case studies suggest anything approaching a static situation, although the direction of change can hardly be confidently discerned. Nor would it be accurate to think of this vast and highly pluralistic set of relationships as a substitute for the state.

Although the growth of NGOs may indicate vibrant participation in a civil society, it also suggests a potential difficulty. A modicum of state power remains necessary to support the essential order underpinning a society and to avoid civil war. The phenomenon of failed states suggests that 'inadequate stateness' may partly explain collapse. Moreover, nongovernmental organisations may compet

for scarce resources. Without fungible resources, those going to NGOs from the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) country allocations, for example, are unavailable for governments. Pluralism may have unintended costs if NGOs exacerbate the problem of inadequate central government capacity.

Yet, both international and local NGOs have become an unavoidable reality in the efforts by a rudimentary international community to respond to global problems. Because NGOs are increasingly important in world politics, theoretical and practical understandings of their activities are essential in comprehending the problems and prospects of the UN system. If the case studies open a window on this understanding, a great deal more needs to be done to approach a satisfactory and satisfying level of knowledge.

Both IGOs and NGOs thus have an intimate connection to the more general problem of global governance. The culture and character of nongovernmental organisations inclines them to act, rather than to contemplate and reflect. That adds yet more poignancy to exploring the relationships between IGOs, governments and NGOs in the context of global governance.

Ambiguities and dilemmas of NGO and UN interactions

In addition to the lessons and the consensus observations that resulted from the analyses in the preceding case studies, their discussion in Toronto, and our own research, several ambiguities also emerge, and present dilemmas facing policy makers. As such, they also constitute the skeleton of a future research agenda for scholars and policy analysts.

- The naïve and exaggerated notion that the outcome of NGO efforts is universally worthwhile is, in fact, contradicted by experience and analysis. There is no shortage of achievements, for example ranging from framing the agenda for human rights, women and the environment to delivery of technical assistance and humanitarian relief. At the same time, some activities that originally seemed justified by an implementing nongovernmental organisation have backfired in the longer run. Prominent examples can be drawn from the humanitarian arena, where the well-intentioned facilitation of the movement of refugees contributed to 'ethnic cleansing' and to the erosion of international norms. The development arena, too, is laden with examples of projects that were designed to introduce new technologies and production schemes, but that helped to destroy local capacities and the fabric of social structures. In short, any responsible NGO must try to anticipate negative externalities.
- Following this ambiguity is another one related to the mixture of conflict, competition, cooperation and cooptation as nongovernmental organisations determine how close their links should be with states or organisations of the UN system. These four 'Cs' could be viewed as a spectrum along which there are rather unclear boundaries; probably most would aim at the middle two categories on competition and cooperation. Even the extremes of conflict and cooptation can bring benefits, as several NGOs have demonstrated by using confrontational or rejectionist strategies (within the AIDS and environmental movements, for instance), or by becoming well integrated into UN program-

ming exercises for humanitarian emergencies. Moreover, as the examinations of cooperation in Central America or the coalition-building efforts within InterAction or the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) suggest, there are few zero-sum outcomes. Policy makers and analysts are left with trying to determine the advantages and disadvantages of any partnership, at least for the present, on a case-by-case basis.

- The outcome that particular NGOs seek determines whether NGOs are better served by trying to define an issue narrowly (for example women and the environment) at the grassroots level and to concentrate efforts on well-circumscribed targets within logical organisational targets (for example the forthcoming Women's Conference in Beijing or the UN Environmental Programme) or, alternatively, whether it is better to 'mainstream' such issues into wider global concerns. To continue with these examples, it may be that both the causes of women's rights and sustainable development are better served by focusing educational efforts and advocacy upon more general issues of investment and development within the World Bank. The potential payoff from a change in policy by a major mainstream actor may dwarf more spectacular rhetorical gains in more narrowly focused institutional settings with ambitious agendas. Once again, generalising about the desired nature of a response depends on better data and analyses than we possess now. In fact, it may be that progress requires simultaneous efforts at both levels.
- The growth in NGO activity has had an impact at both ends of the spectrum of organisational size. On the one hand, a handful of 'super' nongovernmental organisations is emerging. In the humanitarian arena this means that eight to ten large conglomerates of international NGOs account for what may be 80% of the financial value of assistance in complex emergencies. Some of these are also involved in other operational areas with the UN system; but the same generalisations about human rights, the environment and women do not apply because there are no 'super' NGOs in these areas. With diminishing real public resources for development assistance, of which very little (perhaps 4% to 5%) has been devoted to education and advocacy, there are few 'super' agencies. At the other end of the spectrum—the community and local levels—the erosion and sometimes failure of state authority has permitted the emergence of an ever-increasing number of NGOs. Moreover, small and even minuscule international NGOs are also increasingly involved in the entire range of activities undertaken by the UN system. An evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of the growth at both ends of the spectrum depends upon the issue area and may even depend upon the observer's evaluation of the necessity for enhancing the state capacity to provide at least a modicum of services. Although there is no nostalgia for the national security state of the past, clearly there is a downside to inadequate stateness.
- NGOs exist at the community, local, national, regional and international levels. These levels are obvious ones for analysis, but too little is known about links among them and about the direct and indirect feedback among the various levels. For example, powerful and influential international NGOs working on the AIDS pandemic can avoid the regulatory power of local and national authorities by linking directly with grassroots nongovernmental organisations.

Rather than direct confrontation, community-based and local NGOs working on human rights or the environment may decide to embarrass their state authorities indirectly through an international conference or a communication from an intergovernmental governing body. The relative merits of various tactics depend upon evaluations, yet to be accomplished, detailing and comparing the results of previous efforts.

- The nature of representation within nongovernmental organisations as well as within their coalitions, and by NGOs within international gatherings, is a source of some perplexity if not ambiguity for analysts. NGOs themselves are not necessarily democratic, which raises the question of who represents what to whom. Elections are hardly frequent occurrences within NGOs, which do not function the way representative governments do. And the elites of large NGOs at the summit or even at lower levels of expenditures may hardly be different from those of IGOs or the governments that they supposedly confront. NGO leaders may push their own personal agendas rather than those of constituents. Nevertheless, the introduction of nongovernmental concerns into international dialogue is healthy. Perhaps the best that can be hoped for may be a kind of crude balance at the local, national and international levels in which a mixture of governmental, intergovernmental and nongovernmental voices more closely reflects reality than a state-dominated framework with only a smattering of intergovernmental input.

On a related issue, the previous essays suggest that the demand by local and international NGOs for the right to be represented in international forums has not been matched with an adequate effort to define concomitant responsibilities to accompany such rights. Within certain NGO families, efforts to formulate codes of conduct that move in the direction of defining minimal obligations have been made. Numerous dilemmas are associated with the various forms of representation. Few unambiguous guidelines orient managers and decision-makers who seek to improve democratisation of the nongovernmental sector.

- The terms 'cooperation', 'collaboration', and 'coordination' are sprinkled liberally throughout international discourse and in the preceding essays. These concepts suggest a dilemma: cooperation and collaboration may be good, but on whose terms? Everyone favours coordination, but no one wishes to be coordinated. Joint ventures among NGOs and between them and members of the UN system involve unexpected as well as expected costs—human, temporal, financial, and lost autonomy—as well as benefits. Some experts argue that greater cooperation, coherence and centralisation are essential, especially during acute humanitarian emergencies. Others argue that the positive impact emanating from the diversity of NGOs and from competition among themselves and between this sector and the UN system outweighs purported benefits from pooling efforts. In any case, the different values and operating styles between NGOs and intergovernmental organisations, along with the NGOs' ferocious insistence on maintaining independence, probably preclude any far-reaching harmonisation of efforts.
- Independent statistical data from the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and other institutions and the case studies here

indicate that NGOs are receiving greater resources from both private and public sources. Both governments and UN organisations increasingly rely on NGOs to deliver services. Nongovernmental organisations collectively now disperse more official development assistance (ODA) than does the entire UN system (excluding the Washington-based financial institutions). Moreover, in many countries they are powerful sources of employment and foreign exchange. This development is strikingly evident in complex emergencies where state authority is extremely weak and sometimes nonexistent. This trend calls for deeper analysis on the basis of more complete data. At a time of diminishing and fungible resources, financing local and international NGOs is sometimes simply subtracted from that originally intended for governments. Moreover, some NGOs employ dramatic images to elicit contributions from individuals and from bilateral donors and intergovernmental secretariats. This public relations technique often works against the more nuanced messages intended to educate donor constituencies about the root causes of conflict and poverty.

- The quality and characteristics of particular UN institutions can help or hinder the development of an effective partnership between local and international NGOs. Virtually nothing is known about the sociology and anthropology of the cultures within the UN family, except that they are clearly not monolithic. UNHCR and UNICEF not only contract for services from NGOs but also endeavour to involve them more intimately in project formulation and policy consultations. This may reflect the fact that these institutions have a relatively high number of staff members who themselves have previously worked in NGOs or are at least sympathetic to many of their values and programmatic emphases. This is very different from the relationships between the World Bank and nongovernmental organisations. Part of the explanation may, no doubt, lie in the possibility that the staff and managers in Washington know less about the strengths of both local and international NGOs. Moreover, the dimensions of the World Bank's projects and the incentives to its managers for large-scale implementation would seem to impede closer working relations with NGOs. Yet such comments are merely speculative, since too few resources have been devoted to analysing the composition and behaviour of international secretariats.
- Beginning with the establishment of the United Nations, and especially since the General Assembly adopted Resolution 1296 in 1968, officials from governmental, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental organisations have invested a seemingly disproportionate amount of energy in determining which NGOs qualify for official consultative status. Our own observations and virtually all of the case studies suggest that formal relationships may not be the most essential element in determining the efficacy, power and overall impact of NGO efforts, even efforts to influence opinion and help set international standards. In fact, the superficial characterisation of informality as marginal or weak does not appear to apply to the efforts to foster women's rights or appropriate policy reactions to the threat of AIDS. Moreover, other types of informal relationships, such as those that characterise efforts by knowledgeable technicians and are often labelled epistemic communities

within the environmental and other arenas, may be every bit as influential as NGOs that enjoy consultative status.

Some concluding thoughts

Three overall conclusions, which may not be surprising but which are hardly trivial, may be set out with some confidence. First and most evident, far too little useful statistical information or even basic descriptive information exists about the phenomenon of NGOs that are active in the milieu surrounding the United Nations system. This makes theory-building and policy recommendations a hazardous, if not totally nonfeasible, undertaking. We have no convincing or well-tested models. This reflects the difficulties of groping in a rapidly evolving, uncertain global society.

Second, the age of innocence is over for NGOs as they relate to the UN system. There is a need to understand better and to contextualise fully any programmatic activity before taking action. The staff and constituencies of NGOs have generally believed that human and financial resources devoted to policy analysis and evaluation were irrelevant and even wasteful. They have preferred action to reflection. However, visceral reactions are no longer an adequate basis on which to base projects and programmes. The wrong kind of assistance to displaced persons, for instance, can worsen their situation and respect for international norms, and perhaps even prolong conflicts. Inappropriate development—involving the continued treatment of women as second-class citizens or the destruction of non-sustainable resources—may not necessarily be better than none at all. Fundraising of a sensational nature, even if effective, can undermine longer-run efforts to improve public knowledge about issues of direct consequence. Disarmament efforts occasionally may work against the type of security required to conduct normal activities. All of this is by way of saying that more reflection and less action is sometimes in order, and that NGO resources can and should legitimately be spent on analysis.

Third, we return to the point of departure and the final part of this volume's title, 'global governance'. Several prominent intellectuals, as well as august commissions, have struggled with this notion. We, however, posited the straightforward idea that it consists of more ordered and more reliable responses to problems that go beyond the individual and even collective capacities of states. The agreed and proverbial bottom line for all definitions of global governance, however, consists of enhanced transparency, accountability and participation. Under the right conditions, the growth in the number of local and international NGOs and in their roles and responsibilities at all levels, along with their increasing relevance to the operational and normative activities of the UN system, provides more opportunities to satisfy the requirements for improved transparency, accountability and participation.

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Volume 25 forthcoming
ISSN 0261-3131
Distributed bimonthly
in North America by
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1995 RATES: Individual \$34.00, Institution \$83.00, Student (copy of current ID required) \$23.00.

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FEATURE REVIEWS

Straddling the fence: An equivocal proposal for future multilateral governance

W Andy Knight

The Report of the Commission on Global Governance, Our Global Neighbourhood
(New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 316 pp.

At its initial moment, the United Nations was consigned a number of lofty goals (eg to maintain international peace and security, develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, achieve international cooperation in solving international socio-economic, cultural and humanitarian problems, encourage and promote respect for human rights, ensure fundamental freedoms for all, and assume its position as the centre for harmonizing actions of nations in order to attain the above common ends).¹ Later, other goals were added such as protecting the global commons and encouraging democratization across the globe. It is no wonder therefore that many international organization observers saw in the UN system the outlines of an embryonic global governance mechanism.

Fifty years have since passed, but this universal multilateral organization have yet to deliver 'the goods'. For one thing, the scourge of war is far from being eliminated. Principles of fundamental freedoms, equal rights, human rights, socio-economic and cultural rights are daily being trampled on. Humanitarian problems are ubiquitous across the globe. And, as the Commission on Global Governance recently acknowledged: 'There remains dangers that could threaten civilization and, indeed, the future of humankind.' Thus, it is not surprising, as we approach the next millennium, to see a proliferation of studies and reports reflecting the urgent need for the development of new forms of multilateralism and better instruments of global governance. *Our Global Neighbourhood* represents this genre of research, most of which begin with the normative position that the post-Cold War global community needs an environment of peace, equity, improved socio-economic and welfare conditions, and justice.²

Although limited by a predominately problem-solving epistemological orientation, the Commission on Global Governance report does attempt to go beyond the confines of an analysis of 'UN Reform.' Indeed, it examines the broader problematic of what is required for improved global governance. Headed by a group of prestigious international figures (Sir Shridath Ramphal, former secretary general of the Commonwealth and the former Swedish Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson) the *Report* reviews existing arrangements of global governance against the contemporary backdrop of profound, rapid and pervasive change and uncertainty in the international system. It sees this juncture in our history as a time of 'challenge and opportunity.' Its seven chapters constitute a comprehensive analysis of the concept, values, problems and potential of global governance designed to goad state leaders into recognizing the need for a world institutional system that is much more responsive to the interests of all nations and peoples than the existing one.

This review critically examines the analytical structure of the book, the arguments made in each chapter and the prescriptive proposals of the Commission. It then

highlights the links between the Commission's proposals and the Kantian cosmopolitan vision for multilateral governance arrangements and shows the extent to which the Commission has reconceptualized 'global governance'. Finally, the conclusions point out the equivocal nature of the *Report*, place it between two competing conceptual approaches to the study of multilateralism (traditional and critical) and offer the opinion that this work straddles the fence between 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' conceptions and practices of multilateral governance.

Framework of Analysis

In chapter one, entitled 'A New World', the Commission's concept of global governance reveals a normative fence-straddling position. While recognizing the presence, practice and increasing importance of non-state actors and new social movements to global governing, the Commission contends that states and governments remain the primary public institutions 'for constructive responses to issues affecting peoples and the global community as a whole.' Implied in that statement is the notion that somehow the actions of non-state actors may not be 'constructive' with regard to such issues. This implication is borne out in the *Report* by the following quote: 'Any adequate system of governance must have the capacity to control and deploy the resources necessary to realize its fundamental objectives. It must encompass actors who have the power to achieve results, must incorporate necessary controls and safeguards, and must avoid overreaching.' (p 4) Such a statement raises the question of whether or not global governance is an activity in which new social movements (and some other non-state actors without the requisite resources and power) can be engaged. The answer is never clear throughout the text of this *Report*.

What follows in chapter one is an excellent examination of the substantive changes in military, economic, social and environmental fields that have occurred in the international system since 1945. These changes include: the fundamental shift in the relative standing of world powers and in the structure of world politics immediately after World War II, the collapse of the old colonial order and the influx of new states into the UN system after the late 1950s, the revolution in communications and transportation technologies which 'quickened the pace of interaction and strengthened the imperative of response, the extra-ordinary growth in global industrial and agricultural production particularly over the past few decades, the profound social after-effects of industrialization, globalization of the economy and increased deregulation, the growth in number and activity of non-governmental organizations and social movements and the revitalization of civil society. As the Commission notes, some of these widespread changes have specifically posed a significant challenge to the Westphalian notion of sovereignty. For instance, technological improvements have made state borders more porous making it more difficult for governments to govern. Also, globalization forces have produced a number of contradictions that affect governing institutions. In reaction to these forces a number of grassroots movements have sprung up, demanding either devolution of, or secession from, states. According to the Commission members, this period of change and uncertainty calls for 'balance' and 'caution', as well as 'bold vision'. In their estimation: 'Our common future will depend on the extent to which people and leaders around the world develop the vision of a better world and the strategies, the institutions, and the will to achieve it.' (p 12) For the Commission, the challenges posed by global structural changes are so great, and so much more complicated than those of 1945, that new institutions and mind-sets are required to meet them.

Chapter two delineates the core values of 'the Global Neighbourhood'—a reformu-

lation of the 'global village' concept. This neighbourhood is depicted as one that is interconnected due to the communications revolution and the broader complex interdependence phenomenon. However, because of its diversity and pluralism, the Commission authors admit that it will be difficult to reach agreement on common action and a common set of core values such as respect for life, liberty, reciprocity, caring, integrity, human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law. Yet this is precisely what the world needs at this critical juncture, according to the Commission. This chapter also tackles the thorny issue of adapting established norms of sovereignty and self-determination to a world pervaded by seemingly paradoxical trends of globalization and fragmentation—perhaps the greatest challenge to global governance in the global neighbourhood. This global neighbourhood is portrayed as 'far from ideal', which poses another major challenge to governance at the international level. The picture painted by the *Report* is one of a pre-dominantly state-based neighbourhood whose space just happens to be shared by members of civil society.

In this chapter, one is struck by the Commission's advocacy of shared values. Here, the authors make a significant leap from simply exposing their normative position to promoting the logic of a global ethic seemingly based on ancient humanist and religious philosophies and ideologies. Those who subscribe to this value system would: pay heed to the interest of future generations; treat others as they would like to be treated; adapt traditional norms of interstate relations to new circumstances; uphold and promote democracy as the underpinning element of the global ethic; support to rule of enforceable law; respect life, liberty, justice, equity, mutual respect, caring and integrity, and; accept non-violence as the preferred means of social interaction. This is a tall order for any society, far less a global society that is divided along cultural and ethnic lines and in which the disparities between rich and poor are so immense. The so-called 'neighbourhood values' are complemented by what the *Report* calls 'a global civic ethic' of rights and responsibilities. Acknowledging that national civil societies have begun to merge into a broader global civil society, the Commission predicts that this embryonic society will eventually become unruly and un-focused unless it embraces a civic ethic that combats corruption, promotes democracy and legitimacy, and improves the general quality of life in the global neighbourhood. The central underlying feature of this global civic ethic for the Commission, however, is adherence to the rule of law. Without it, 'global governance' becomes a contradiction in terms. The rule of law seems to be the answer to most of the contemporary problems we face, including what appears to be a retreat to a 'new' global dis-order.

Chapter Three is a response to this 'new' world dis-order. It addresses ways of promoting common security in light of expanding concept of security. Here the Commission advocates the development of a new set of norms for security policies. Their 'wish-list' is by no means original, but they are packaged so as to appeal to the state/society complex's need for safeguards against threats to security; a departure from the traditional statist approach to security. However, the Commission's approach to addressing the 'culture of violence' is overly simplistic and vague. This is reflected in the following lame statement: 'We strongly endorse community initiatives to protect individual life, to encourage the disarming of civilians, and to foster an atmosphere of security in neighbourhoods.' (p 131) Such a statement does little good to Somalis, Rwandans, Bosnians, Serbs or Croats. What would be more useful is an answer to the question of how those community initiatives can be brought about.

Chapter four deals with the challenge of managing economic interdependence and the environment. A strong case is made for the adoption of a multilateralist 'subsidiarity' framework in which economic responsibility can be allocated to institutions of global, regional, national, and local governance in a matter that would lend itself to efficiency

and competence. The Commission makes the argument that global governance cannot be limited to public sector activity. Multinational financial and banking companies account for a substantial portion of economic activity and their business is usually world-wide in scope. Similarly, other non-state actors, such as the Red Cross and Green Crescent are playing a growing role in governance at the global level. While these bodies may not be able to substitute for an effective intergovernmental structure, as was implied earlier they cannot be excluded from playing a role in global governance. This fact is more or less acknowledged by the Commission. There is very little in the way of new debate surrounding the issues of trade, developmental assistance, multilateral aid, the reduction of poverty and sustainable development. Much of what is said in the *Report* about these issues can be found elsewhere, particularly in the New International Economic Order (NIEO) discourse and the recent UN reports dealing with Agenda 21 and sustainable development. What is significant, however, is the recognition that in the case of environmental/sustainable development issues, NGOs have demonstrated a capacity to provide leadership in important areas of international effort, and are also able to launch and carry the negotiating process 'to a point of maturity that intergovernmental processes would have taken much longer to reach.' (p 217) This chapter ends with the controversial idea of instituting a global taxation system that would help finance the activities of global governance--an idea already advanced in greater detail elsewhere,³ but one for which most of the world's peoples are unready.

Chapter five contains prescriptive recommendations for institutional changes in the UN system. The main thrust of the argument in this chapter is that a way must be found to convert the constitutional rhetoric of 'we the peoples' (boldly stated at the beginning of the preamble of the UN Charter) into concrete reality. Here is where the conceptualization of cosmopolitan international organization comes in. This is clear from the following statement: '... the UN is "us". Although the membership consists of states represented by governments, these governments are increasingly accountable to people for their international actions; and governments, like the UN, are gradually becoming more open to international civil society organizations and other non-governmental voices.' (p 227) On the one hand, the Commission wants to see adjustments to the world body that would embrace global societal elements, but, on the other hand, its feet remain firmly planted on the state-centric side of the global governance fence. In other words, the Commission is straddling the fence that currently separates 'top-down' from 'bottom-up' versions of multilateralism. The prescriptive recommendations in this chapter are broken down into the following categories: improvements to the security apparatus; strengthening the socio-economic bodies; democratizing the intergovernmental and political institutions and empowering the legal element.

In the *security* field the Commission recommends: revising the UN Charter so that the Security Council can authorize action in intra-state conflicts (but only when the security of people is so extensively violated as to require humanitarian intervention); revitalizing the UN General Assembly so that it plays a vital legitimating role consonant with the universality of its membership; strengthening the preventive mechanisms of the UN, i.e. early warning mechanisms, comprehensive system of information collection; enhancing the UN's rapid response capability by creating a UN volunteer force; improving the Secretary General's fact-finding capacity; reactivating the Military Staff Committee; increasing funds for peacekeeping operations in order to keep up with the increasing demands in this area; renewing the NPT for an indefinite period; creating new Nuclear Weapons Free Zones as a means of confining the spread of these weapons; establishing a demilitarization fund to help countries reduce their military commitments, and; negotiating a world wide ban on the manufacture and export of land mines.

In the *socio-economic* area, the *Report* calls for: the establishment of an Apex

body—the Economic Security Council (ESC) which would be as important as the current Security Council; the speedy implementation of the proposed plan for a World Trade Organization; the reform of the decision-making structure of the Bretton Woods institutions to make them more democratic; the enhancement of the role of the IMF in increasing its capacity to provide balance-of-payment support, oversee policy in major economies as part of a more active practice of seeking policy convergence, release a new issue of Special Drawing Rights, and support nominal exchange rates; the strengthening of the World Bank's role in development financing through an enhanced IDA and by extending its financial intermediation role through greater use of guarantees and co-financing of big projects; the institution of a more radical debt reduction strategy for heavily indebted low-income countries; the fortification of the capacity of insurance markets to meet the economic costs of disasters in poor and small countries; charging levies on the use of common global resources, such as flight lanes, sea lanes, ocean fishing areas, the electromagnetic spectrum, essentially to provide money for global purposes; exploration of the possibility of an international tax on foreign currency transactions; and the creation of an international corporate tax base for multinational companies.

Democratizing the inter-governmental and global political institutions, requires, according to the *Report*: enlarging the Security Council to make it more representative of the entire UN membership by creating a new class of five 'standing' (rather than permanent) members whose status would be reviewed around the year 2005; raising the number of non-permanent (rotating) members from ten to thirteen; phasing out the veto in the Security Council after the year 2005; creating a Forum of Civil Society reminiscent of the Kantian cosmopolitan model of international organization, which would convene each August before the annual session of the General Assembly to transform the now outmoded Trusteeship Council into a body responsible for overseeing and maintaining the global commons; creating a Council for Petition that would hear the complaints of members of international civil society concerning threats to their security; eliminating ECOSCO, UNCTAD and UNIDO, and merging the 2nd and 3rd Committees; enhancing the UN's capacity to advance the rights of women, beginning with the promotion of more women to senior Secretariat positions; radically improving the procedure for appointing a Secretary General and restricting the appointment to a single term of seven years; and applying consistently article 19 of the UN Charter which calls for the disenfranchisement of member-states that are grossly in arrears; and revising the formula for assessed financial contributions so that the UN is not so dependent on the large contribution from any single member state.

In the *legal* area, the Commission proposes: limiting World Court judges to a 10-year term only and developing a system to screen potential members for jurisprudential skills and objectivity; encouraging states to include in future agreements and treaties provisions for the settlement of interstate disputes; giving the UN Secretary-General the right to refer at an advance stage legal aspects of any dispute to a full bench of the World Court; appointing a distinguished legal advisor to provide independent advice to the Security Council on international legal propositions that might develop within that body; encouraging the Council to make greater use of the World Court as a source of advisory opinion on matters which might have some relevance for international law; establishing an international criminal court with an independent prosecutor or panel of prosecutors of high moral character, high level of competence and experience.

Most of these suggestions are not original. But for the casual reader, it is useful to have this cumulative and distilled account of prescriptive recommendation for improving global governance and multilateral structures and processes all in one place. Taken as a package, these proposals highlight the amount of adjustment that is required if the U

is to become, not only an efficient and effective world body but also, one of the relevant global governance institutions of the next century. The Commissioners recognize that failure to implement these changes could result in the marginalization of the UN system and, possibly in its eventual dissolution.

Chapter six proposes a number of ways of strengthening the rule of international law. It begins with the premise that the standing of international law is being questioned today, particularly by states. This situation can be improved if: states accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice (ICJ); acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ was made a prerequisite for UN membership; the ICJ's chamber procedure was reformed; ICJ judges were appointed for only one term of ten years and not submit themselves for re-election; the UN Secretary General was empowered to refer legal dimensions of emerging disputes to the ICJ at an early stage for advisory opinion; the World Court developed 'fast-track' procedures for dealing with such matters; the Security Council made greater use of the ICJ as a source of advisory opinions; an international criminal court were to be established 'as a matter of highest priority'; universally recognized norms and values are protected in domestic settings; courts more readily admit cases in which individuals and NGOs seek to enforce compliance with international norms at the domestic juridical level; governments' foreign policies are in conformity with international norms and standards, and; international laws are respected, effectively monitored and enforced. As mentioned earlier, for the Commission, the very essence of global governance 'is the capacity of the international community to ensure compliance with the rules of society.' [p 326] The conclusion reached in this chapter that the future global neighbourhood must be characterized by law, rather than lawlessness cannot be disputed. But, quite apart from the fact that the Commission's concept of law is decidedly Western and Euro-centric, the *Report* comes up short in explaining how different interpretations of what constitute 'law' are to be reconciled.

The final chapter is a call to action. In it the Commission's prescriptive proposals are summarized and an implementation strategy outlined. It is obvious in this chapter that the Commissioners are unimpressed with the existing reform procedures and processes adopted by the UN system. The piecemeal and incremental reformist approach at the UN has produced little in the way of concrete changes to the way global governance is done. Therefore, the *Report* calls for a more deliberate and far-reaching process of overhauling and transforming the second generation international organization into a body that is more inclusive of civil society, more democratic, and more relevant to the changing times. However, one has to question whether the transformative changes envisioned by the Commission can actually come about in the forum they recommend—ie a World Conference on Governance held by the UN General Assembly (a state-centric body). Here again we see the Commission straddling the fence that separates existing traditional approaches to multilateralism and the more visionary, revolutionary approach that calls for the radical transformation of extant multilateral institutions of global governance. While some of the proposals in this *Report* call for a recognition of the presence and importance of 'bottom-up' multilateralism and governance (ie that which percolates upward from the base of civil society), the *Report* is obviously constrained by authors whose conceptual framework is very much rooted in an understanding of multilateralism and governance that is 'top-down' (ie of the Westphalian, sovereignty-bound, state-centric variety). This should not be surprising considering that most of the Commissioners carry the baggage of being either past or current state officials or representatives of state-centric organizations.⁴

Links Between the Commission's Proposals and the Vision of Kantian Cosmopolitanism

In trying to reconcile existing global institutions (that are sometimes exclusive and non-democratic) with emerging requirements of non-state actors for more inclusive and democratic multilateral governance arrangements the Commission on Global Governance exposes a bent towards the Kantian cosmopolitan model of international organization.⁵ That model is based on an ideal to which rational thinking humans are expected to move gradually. It envisages a movement from an international anarchic system to a more orderly world as people realize the unprofitability and senselessness of war. Kant felt that war could be gradually abolished through the elimination of conditions that encouraged it. Accomplishing this would require, in his estimation, a world society of republican states voluntarily joined together in a federation—a federation consisting of a congress for dispute settlement and of mechanisms to guard against interference by one state into the internal affairs of another. Based on Kant's vision, states would be free to enter or withdraw from the federation at will. His plan also advocated the right to self-determination and adherence to a law of cosmopolitanism. *Our Global Neighbourhood*, also recognizes the need for organizing international society along cosmopolitan lines. The Commission's vision is therefore not unlike Kant's.

Kant placed emphasis on the homogeneity of the political constitutions of states that intend to be part of the cosmopolitan union. The choice of a republican constitution was based on the premise that republican governments tend to encourage direct participation of civil society in the management of public affairs, including that of foreign affairs. Republicanism was equated with peaceful orientations since the consent of citizens would be necessary before a republican government could engage in war. The Commission's *Report* also has a similar underlying premise: that democracies are less prone to fight with each other and should therefore be the ideal to which all states should reach. The primary difference between Kant's cosmopolitan model and the more utopian and diffused models of international organization lies in his support for 'the existence of both autonomous states and a voluntary confederation of states.' Thus his cosmopolitan model would consist of: 1) an assembly of 'free' states (based on the criterion of 'one state, one vote'); 2) an international community consisting of both individuals of civil society and state sovereigns; 3) a cosmopolitan assembly comprised of citizens of individual states; 4) dispute settlement mechanisms within the assembly to address conflict between states; 5) an international public opinion gauge represented in the form of the cosmopolitan assembly. As Archibugi notes, the strength of this model is its aim 'to create an international community which, while recognizing the full sovereignty of states, also allows for the participation of individuals through their direct delegates thus avoiding an undesirable centralization of power.'⁶ The recommendations of the Commission on Global Governance also includes this formula of combining state and civil society representation in any future multilateral governance structure.

Reconceptualizing Global Governance

Historical analyses of the evolution of multilateralism will show a normative quest for better forms of governance at the international level, amidst an Hobbesian anarchical international society of states. What is usually left unclear in these analyses is the important differentiation between 'governance' and 'government'. Whereas governance systems are 'social institutions or set of rules guiding the behaviour of those engaged in identifiable social practices', governments are 'organizations or material entities established to administer the provisions of governance systems.'⁷ The Commission's report helps to clarify this distinction by pointing out that governance is the 'sum of the many

ways individuals, and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs.' The report adds that governance is not a static institutional activity but rather 'a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and co-operative action may be taken.' [p 2] Therefore the act of governance can be located at several different locals (neighbourhood collectives, town councils, multi-urban bodies, the stock exchange, municipal, provincial or national government agencies, and regional and international organizations).

In times past, the activity of governance was thought of as being limited to states and the formal intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) they agree to form. When the UN was founded in 1945, for instance, states were dominant players on the international stage. State governments were also considered to be the only entities capable of protecting the interests of their civil societies. Thus, it seemed natural then to create a set of international, intergovernmental institutions to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and to ensure prosperity for all. Today, however, as the *Report* recognizes, national governments and the United Nations system, while still very much central to the conduct of global governance, are only a part of the full picture. Thus, as we enter the twenty-first century, global governance is being re-conceived as systems of rule at all levels of human activity. Based on this re-conceptualization, global governance should be broad enough to embrace the whole patchwork of institutions, processes, and people which together make up international society. *Our Global Neighbourhood* reinforces this understanding.

The report of the Commission on Global Governance also makes a worthy effort at defining what should be considered the work of global governance today. Such tasks include: maintaining peace and order in the global neighbourhood, expanding economic activity, dealing with the problems of pollution, greenhouse warming, combating diseases, curbing the horizontal and vertical proliferation of weapons, preserving genetic diversity, deterring terrorism, warding off famine, saving endangered species, solving economic problems, developing fair ways of sharing the earth's resources, halting drug trafficking, tackling the problems of aids and other fatal diseases, and the list can go on. No single governing institution can properly tackle this growing list of tasks demanded of international society. Certainly, the UN system is not able to undertake them all. Global governance for now and the future must therefore involve an immense, dynamic, complex process of interactive decision-making that is constantly evolving and responding to changing historical circumstances and material conditions. As the Commission suggests, the tasks of global governance must be shared between global, regional and local organizations.

Conclusions

There are at least two competing conceptual approaches to the study of multilateralism and global governance; traditional and critical approaches. The first approach accepts uncritically the existing configuration of state and economic power and opts for piecemeal reforms to existing multilateral and governance structures so long as they are in accordance with the overall vision of 'status-quo' elements within the international system. In otherwords, it proposes the reform or adaptation of the existing multilateral *institutional framework* without questioning the constitutive principles or underlying ideas of world politics embodied within that framework.

The second approach emphasizes the importance of analysing the nexus between evolving global order and changes to the concrete manifestations of the multilateral process (ie the institutions and organizations of global governance).⁸ Advocates of this approach will first ask, 'what are the ways in which global order is changing' and 'do

we have the correct institutional structures and arrangements to deal with the new demands that are bound to emerge from such changes?' The multilateral process, therefore, is conceived from this perspective as a *longue durée* historical one in which institutions and organizations are created in response to demands arising from elements within the international system or global society, reflecting the nature of world order at the time. According to the critical view, the UN system represents the most recent universalist attempt at institutionalizing a particular form of world order; viz the immediate post-1945 world order, and its various sub-organs are improvements on previous institutional features designed to meet the demands for greater security, welfare and justice emanating from the global society. However, it is not to be regarded as the final product in multilateral evolution.

Very few of the recent writing on United Nations and multilateral institutional reform can be said to stand outside the prevailing and traditional approaches to multilateralism. *Our Global Neighbourhood* is one of a few recent works that try to do this in order to reflect on the possibility of the evolution in the quest for better forms of global governance. However, its authors reveal a certain state-centric bias which leads one to conclude that they have a major stake in maintaining the existing institutions of governance. This results, on balance, in a fairly schizophrenic work which is at the same time traditional as it is critical. To be in such a position is not necessarily a bad thing. Clearly, at this juncture in our history, we cannot speak as though we have arrived at any coherent, or viably aggregated, form of 'global governance'. What we have can best be described as partial governance with very few linking-pin connections that could give it a truly holistic and global shape. At the same time, it would seem, however, that there has been an evolution of sorts in the multilateral activity of human society whose trajectory bears evidence of a progressive, albeit not consistently unilinear, development in the direction of what might be called 'global governance'. The Commission's efforts reflects this ambiguity.

This book figuratively straddles a fence that separates 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' forms of multilateral or global governance approaches. While its authors demonstrate and seem able to appreciate the need for 'new' multilateralism, they appear equally unwilling to distance themselves totally from the 'old' multilateralism practised in state-centric organizations like the UN system. As such, *Our Global Neighbourhood* is little different from its predecessors, ie the Brandt, Palme, Brundtland, and Nyerere Commissions. This book fails to deliver on its declared objective—ie to offer 'a new vision that can galvanize people everywhere to achieve higher levels of cooperation in areas of common concern and shared destiny.' [p 1] What it does accomplish, though, is the initiation of a debate on what that vision ought to be. It may not live up to its over-stated pre-publication billing as 'the most important book of the decade,' but as Nelson Mandela more modestly put it, *Our Global Neighbourhood* is 'a timely work deserving our full attention.'

Notes

¹ See Article I of the UN Charter.

² Some other examples include, Michael G Schechter (ed.), *Multilateralism and Global Change: Prospects for Reform and Innovation* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, forthcoming 1996); Eric Fawcett & Hanna Newcombe (eds.), *United Nations Reform: Looking Ahead after Fifty Years* (Toronto: Dundurn Press Limited, 1995); 'Organizing International Relations: Fifty Years after the United Nations Charter,' *International Social Science Journal*, vol XLVII, no 2 (1995); The Report of the Independent Working Group on the Future of the United Nations, *The United Nations in its Second Half-Century* (New York: The Ford Foundation, 1995); Chadwick Alger, Gene Lyons, & John Trent (eds), *The United Nations System: The Policies of Member States* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 1995); Keith Krause & W Andy Knight

- (eds), *State, Society and the UN System: Changing Perspectives on Multilateralism* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 1995); Erskine Childers (with Brian Urquhart), *Renewing the United Nations System*, Development Dialogue 1994:1 (Uppsala, Sweden: Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 1994); Rosemary Righter, *Utopia Lost: The United Nations and World Order* (New York: The Twentieth Century Fund Press, 1995); James S Sutterlin, *The United Nations and the Maintenance of International Security: A Challenge to be Met* (London: Praeger, 1995); Mihaly Simai, *The Future of Global Governance: Managing Risk and Change in the International System* (Washington, DC, United States Institute of Peace Press, 1994); Oran Young, *International Governance: Protecting the Environment in a Stateless Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994); and Robert Cox, 'Multilateralism and World Order', *Review of International Studies*, vol 18, no 2 (April 1992).
- ¹ Harlan Cleveland, Hazel Henderson & Inge Kaul (eds), 'The United Nations at Fifty: Policy and Financing Alternatives,' *Futures: The Journal of Forecasting, Planning and Policy*, Special Issue, vol 27, no 2 (March 1995).
- ² The Commissioners are: Ingvar Carlsson, Prime Minister of Sweden (1986–91); Shridath Ramphal, Secretary General of the Commonwealth (1975–1990); Ali Alatas, Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Republic of Indonesia (since 1988), Abulatif Al-Hamad, former Minister of Finance and Planning in the Government of Kuwait; Oscar Arias, President of Costa Rica (1986–1990); Anna Balletbo i Puig, Spanish Parliamentary member since 1979; Kurt Biedenkopf, Minister-President of Saxony since 1990; Allan Bosak, former Minister of Economic Affairs for the Western Cape region for the South Africa government; Manuel Camacho Solís, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mexico; Bernard Chidzero, Senior Minister of Finance in Zimbabwe; Barber Conable, President of the World Bank from 1986–1991; Jacques Delors, President of the European Commission since 1985 and former Minister for Economics, Finance, and the Budget in the Government of France; Jiri Diensthiel, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia from 1989–1992; Enrique Iglesias, Minister of External Relations in the Uruguay government (1985–1988); Frank Judd, member of the House of Lords, UK; Hongkoo Lee, Deputy Prime Minister of Korea; Wangari Maathai, an environmental and women activist in Kenya; Sadako Ogata, UN High Commissioner for Refugees and former Japanese envoy to the UN; Olara Otunna, Ugandan Foreign Minister (1985–1986); IG Patel, former economic advisor to the Indian government; Celina Vargas do Amaral Peixoto, Director of the Getulio Vargas Foundation in Brazil; Jan Pronk, Minister for Development Co-operation in the government of the Netherlands (1973–1978); Qian Qidong, Chinese Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva; Marie-Angélique Savané, Director of the African Division of the UN Population Fund; Adele Simmons, President of the John D and Catherine T MacArthur Foundation and former advisor to US Presidents Carter and Bush; Maurice Strong, Secretary General of the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio; Sir Brian Urquhart, current scholar in residence at the Ford Foundation and former Under-Secretary-General in the UN; Yuli Vorontsov, Russian Ambassador to the UN and the US.
- ³ See Daniele Archibugi, 'International Organization in Perpetual Peace Projects,' *Review of International Studies*, vol 18, no 4 (October 1992).
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, pp 312–316.
- ⁵ Oran Young, *International Governance: Protecting the Environment in a Stateless Society*, p. ix.
- ⁶ The term 'institutions' is used here to signify the 'broadly understood and accepted ways of organizing particular spheres of social action.' See Robert Cox, 'Towards a Post-Hegemonic Conceptualization of World Order: Reflections on the Relevancy of Ibn Khaldun', in James Rosenau & Ernst-Otto Czempiel (eds), *Governance without Government: Order and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p 137.
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Sustaining an impact? development NGOs in the 1990s

Roger Charlton

The Road from Rio: sustainable development and the nongovernmental movement in the Third World

Julie Fisher

Westport, Connecticut and London: Praeger, 1993, pp 263, pb £19.95, hb £53.95

Reluctant Partners? Non-Governmental Organizations, the State and Sustainable Agricultural Development

edited by John Farrington and Anthony Bebbington with Kate Wellard and David J. Lewis
London and New York: Routledge, 1993, pp 222, pb £12.99, hb £40.00

Non-Governmental Organizations and the State in Africa: rethinking roles in sustainable agricultural development

edited by Kate Wellard and James G. Copestake
London and New York: Routledge, 1993, pp 331, pb £14.99, hb £45.00

Non-Governmental Organizations and the State in Asia: rethinking roles in sustainable agricultural development

edited by John Farrington and David J. Lewis with S. Satish and Aurea Miclat-Teves
London and New York: Routledge, 1993, pp 366, pb £14.99, hb £45.00

Non-Governmental Organizations and the State in Latin America: rethinking roles in sustainable agricultural development

edited by Anthony Bebbington and Graham Thiele with Penelope Davies, Martin Prager and Hernando Riveros
London and New York: Routledge, 1993, pp 290, pb £14.99, hb £45.00

Making a Difference: NGOs and development in a changing world

edited by Michael Edwards and David Hulme
London: Earthscan Publications Ltd., 1992, pp 240, pb £13.95

Meeting Needs: NGO coordination in practice

Jon Bennett, with Mark Duffield, Monika Kathina Juma, John Borton, Alun Burge, Charlotte Benson
London: Earthscan Publications Ltd, 1995, pp 190, pb £13.95

'The Conscience of the World': the influence of Non-Governmental Organisations on the United Nations system

edited by Peter Willets
London, Hurst and Co.: Washington, Brookings Institution, forthcoming, pp 316

If the 1980s can, even in half-decade retrospect, still be described as the 'decade of NGOs', it is interesting to speculate how the 1990s will be defined. In many respects it is the current decade which better deserves this label, since the 1980s 'discovery' of the nongovernmental sector or movement by the development community has only more recently been followed by a substantial body of publications firmly based on sound empirical work. These, collectively, serve to confirm and underline the many positive developmental impacts, as well as, increasingly, the inevitable limitations of a young, and apparently still rapidly expanding, universe of organisations, to an extent that was impossible even a few years ago when research on NGOs was in its infancy and fond hopes and often unrealistic expectations predominated. This recent NGO-focused literature, now perhaps growing at a rate that, for the first time, parallels and reflects the rates of expansion and diversification of its subject matter, is of a generally high overall quality, and the volumes featured here are among the best of the bunch: uniformly empirically informative and analytically challenging.

Dealing sequentially with each book's central messages and findings and assessing

their individual contributions to our understanding of the current state of play in NGO studies, it is appropriate to start with the most wide-ranging of the volumes under review: *The Road from Rio*. Subtitled *Sustainable Development and the Nongovernmental Movement in the Third World*, Julie Fisher defines this first volume of an ambitious, but badly needed, two-part overview of NGO activities across the whole of the South as an 'appreciative inquiry' (p xii), thereby overtly nailing her own political colours, and hopes, to the NGO mast. Fisher's underlying theme, justifying an unavoidable tendency to country and continent hop, is that the evolving southern NGO movement—a movement compendiously defined by Fisher to include both developmentally-oriented grassroots membership organisations (her GROs) as well as the support or intermediary bodies (her GRSOs) more commonly, and more strictly, defined as NGOs—exhibits fundamental similarities across the whole of the developing world.

These similarities, ultimately stemming from a shared local-level basis and developmental focus that Fisher rightly sees as the fundamental commonality exhibited by the NGO collectivity, are more contentiously viewed as somehow substructural, and thereby as inherently capable of negating the diversities exhibited by what more NGO-observers would tend to define as an otherwise determinedly heterogeneous set of organisations. Indeed, ironically, it is precisely the painstaking recording of the sheer variety of the inhabitants of the contemporary NGO organisational universe that is likely to prove *The Road from Rio*'s most immediately useful, and probably its most enduring, contribution to NGO studies. As Thomas Dichter points out in his helpful, and gently critical, Foreword, 'the first six chapters are as thoroughly researched and fairminded a compendium of NGO diversity as exists' (p viii). As Fisher's extensive, twenty five page, bibliography of published and unpublished sources underlines, the book provides us with as definitive a map of the recent NGO 'organisational explosion' (p 8) across the South as we could hope for, particularly given the fact that, despite the recent proliferation of development NGO-related research and evaluation studies, 'the vast majority of NGOs remain isolated or invisible' (p 7).

Future convergent evolution among southern NGOs (SNGOs) is, however, promised as communications technology reinforces currently proliferating organisational networking practices and fashions. 'Never before have local organizations been so able to communicate with each other—both nationally and internationally' (p 6). Yet at the same time, it must be stressed, there is little hard and unequivocal evidence so far available of the anticipated bottom-up implementation of more sustainable developmental practices emerging from the organisational and interorganisational networking proliferation at the grass (or rice) roots that Fisher so assiduously and so usefully records. Accordingly, the volume's main limitation may best be defined as a tendency to slip rather too enthusiastically (and Fisher's enthusiasm for her subject is both genuine and infectious) from organisation to achievement and from achievement to aspiration.

Largely, the problem lies in Fisher's tendency to view SNGOs as independent variables in developmentally-relevant relationships and sequences. To take one example:

The potential political impact of NGOs is greater in the Third World than in the developed countries ... In most of the Third World it is not just that governments may be ineffective or corrupt, it is also that they are often irrelevant to the most crucial political issues confronting society (p 10).

To some extent this tendency is inherent in Fisher's choice of subject matter, mainly involving an organisationally-specific focus on different types of development NGO and their interorganisational relationships and interactions. Tantalisingly, Fisher's promised, but as yet unpublished, second volume is to 'focus on the relationships between NGOs and governments, their potential impact on political development, and their relationships

with foreign donors' (p xii), leaving us to speculate exactly how much evidence she can muster to support, as well as exactly what is meant by, her contention that '[t]he political impact of NGOs—is already evident in some countries' (p 18). More commonly, in what is now a very large literature, and certainly more realistically, NGOs, and SNGOs in particular tend to be viewed primarily as dependent variables, still substantially, as Thomas Dichter notes, 'at the mercy of very large external forces' (p viii). Of these forces what Dichter nicely terms 'hostile politics' (p ix) is only one of the more obvious of the regularly occurring intervening variables that patrol the organisationally competitive and sometimes downright Darwinian environments that contemporary development NGOs in the South now seek to occupy.

Representative of the best of this literature, and providing us with the most comprehensive and detailed set of research findings so far assembled on the current state of play in NGO-state relationships examined sectorally across a very wide range of countries and a vast range of organisations effectively representative of the situation in the whole of the South, is the physically daunting but accessibly presented four volume set exploring these crucial interactions (and much more) in the context of the agricultural sector. With three regional volumes, covering Africa, Asia and Latin America via seventy-odd case, country and comparative studies, and complemented by a synthesising volume expressively entitled *Reluctant Partners?*, this massive three year Overseas Development Institute research project has produced, with remarkable speed and efficiency given that the project was inaugurated in 1989, what are likely to remain defining, perhaps sometimes definitive, sets of findings for NGO-watchers to internalise. Clearly these are volumes that will, and should, be utilised very differently, by a wide variety of readers ranging from agricultural specialists to regional generalists. However, if the wealth of empirical detail is likely to be variably accessed by different types of reader, all will profit equally from the balanced and careful judgements and considered generalisations presented by the various volume editors.

Most important, at least from the perspective of this review article, are the consistent empirical findings that in Africa, Latin America and Asia alike, it is NGOs which have most commonly initiated relationships with the state, and that these relationships have been 'far more collaborative in vein, and productive in results' (Farrington and Bebbington, p 173) than might have been anticipated in the light of NGOs' largely negative perceptions and often very publicly dismissive depictions, of states and their functionaries. Although it is important to stress that this finding relates specifically to the mainly large, but also mainly southern, service NGOs operating in the broadly defined field of agricultural technology development (ATD) and interacting mainly with national agricultural research services (NARS) that were covered by the ODI project, it may be presumed to have a much wider, perhaps general, relevance to other southern service NGOs—still the largest category of NGOs and probably still the fastest expanding organisational type—*unless and until further large-scale comparative studies indicate otherwise.*

Accordingly, leaving aside the obvious gloss this finding puts on the independent/dependent variable debate, it becomes immediately clear that there is a rather glaring inconsistency between typical NGO rhetoric vilifying corrupt and inefficient states and the common NGO practice of seeking accommodation and initiating collaborative interactions with states and relevant GOs. As Farrington and Bebbington point out, the clear implication is that NGO confrontational rhetoric about GO vices, if partly true, is also in part, perhaps in large part, occasioned by the need to build an 'institutional identity' (p 173) for the NGO sector, and, therefore, may, at least to the extent that the rhetoric is wrong, be seen as damaging not only to the credibility of NGOs and GOs alike, but also to the interests of the beneficiaries and citizens that these organisations

purport to serve. Bluntly, '[i]t is probably time for NGOs to have a finer grained analysis of the state and its different institutions. It is also time for them to begin reappraising their identities' (Farrington and Bebbington, p 174).

At this point thoughts of stones and glass houses immediately come to mind since there is often an equally glaring gap between NGO rhetoric praising sectoral virtues and advantages and the rather more prosaic reality of organisations now more commonly plagued by as many, and often the same, problems as their GO counterparts. Consider, for example, Julie Fisher's somewhat starry-eyed picture of the origins of what she would define as the Third World GRISO movement.

Beginning in the 1970s, the availability of foreign assistance provided idealistic young professionals with an alternative to dead-end government jobs or migration to the developed countries. They were able, instead, to create thousands of grassroots support organizations (GRSOs) concerned with development, environment, the role of women, and primary health care (p 5).

Contrast this with William Postma's description of the more recent realities of life in the NGO sector in Mali, where

'many of the national NGOs were formed in the late 1980s by opportunistic school-leavers and dissatisfied government workers ... "I have my own NGO", was heard on many occasions in Mali'¹

Over the last two decades enormous changes have occurred within the NGO sector, not least as a result of its own phenomenal funding successes and consequent extraordinary expansion. Jan Pronk's dismal 1982 prognosis, made with reference to northern NGOs (INGOs), but now with equal or greater relevance to their SNGO counterparts, has proved to be quite remarkably prescient.

The corruption of NGOs will be the political game in the years ahead ... NGOs have created a large bureaucracy, employment is at stake, and contracts in developing countries are at stake ... NGOs will lose in the years ahead ... they will be corrupted in the process, because they will receive enough money for their own projects but the rest of the aid programme will suffer².

Indeed, perhaps the most paradoxical outcome of funding trends which often continue to prioritise NGOs over GOs is that the former are encouraged increasingly to look and behave like the latter, rather than like the institutions of civil society that they would claim to represent and would prefer to be perceived as paralleling and replicating. Nor should this trend be perceived as surprising, particularly in those parts of the Third World where civil societies are weak and indigenous NGOs have emerged relatively recently. Niger, for example, is not the only African state where 'history weighs heavily, and newly emerging NGOs are patterning themselves after the developmental models they know best—those of the state'³.

However, as the ODI research project confirms, this pattern of indigenous NGOs exhibiting structures and operational norms closer to those characteristic of state institutions than to those practiced in societal organisations operated by their beneficiaries, appears commonly to occur even in those South Asian and Latin American countries with longer histories of NGO activity and vibrant civil societies. As Farrington and Bebbington summarise the research findings relating to NGOs in the ATD sector across the South:

While they generally profess a closer affinity to the poor than to the state, they bear more resemblance to the state than they do to the poor—and in most of their activities they operate in a manner that is more akin to the state than to any organisation of the rural poor (p 177).

Similarly, although research on NGO-market interactions is much less common than

analyses of their interactions with states, the available findings consistently indicate that relationships with government agencies, however hostile, remain consistently stronger, and still much more common, than those characteristically forged with private sectors. Accordingly, insofar as the contemporary situation is one in which SNGOs are 'sucked into the vacuum left by the retreating state and the reluctant private entrepreneurs'⁴, it is clear that NGOs are, as yet, filling only part of the vacuum. Although, as for example the ODI research project reveals, NGO-market interactions are now increasing in frequency and in developmental significance, the clearest cases of sustained impacts on poverty, and of the achievement of other developmentally salient social priorities, continue to correlate with those contexts in which NGOs and GOs interact most closely. Conversely, despite strenuous recent efforts to 'scale up' their impact by 'scaling out'—borrowing Fisher's term for activities covering organisational growth, functional expansion and interorganisational coordination and networking either with other NGOs or with GROs—there is every indication to suggest that growth in the numbers of organisational members or of beneficiaries 'touched' by NGO projects, is as imprecise an indicator of the impact of benefits as gross figures relating to the quantity of NGOs are of their quality and developmental salience. Again, the evidence gathered by the ODI project, indicating that NGO 'efforts remain too small, fragmented, and poorly coordinated ...' (Farrington and Bebbington, p 183) to ensure that their, often innovative, work in ATD has a significant impact on rural poverty, is probably of wider salience.

As the detailed case studies of the often interestingly diverse experiences of the wide variety of INGOs and SNGOs covered in the essays in *Making a Difference* underline, there is no single recipe or foolproof strategy for ensuring effective 'scaling up' of NGO influence. Bluntly, 'there are no straightforward answers to the question of how to enhance the developmental impact of NGOs' (p 211). This is, of course, particularly likely to become a self-fulfilling prophecy if the criteria for successful scaling up are defined in terms of such distant goals as progressing 'from improving local situations on a small scale to influencing the wider systems that create and reinforce global poverty' (p 7), rather than defined, for example, in terms of sectoral and organisational expansion. Clearly, the more ambitious the criteria required of NGOs before they are defined as *Making a Difference*, the higher will be the prioritisation given to influencing policy making processes in both North and South, and to the activities of lobbying and advocacy associated with such a strategy. This prioritisation has certainly been characteristic, or at least perceived as characteristic, of a number of the anglophone big NGOs (BINGOs). Nevertheless, the rather clear-cut limitations placed on overt political activities by UK charity law are paralleled by less legalistic but no less clear-cut and decisive restraints in Third World states, whose governments, even those 'democratised' by competitive elections, tend to remain acutely sensitive about NGO challenges to their already donor-restricted policy making autonomy. Accordingly, recent emphasis has tended to shift towards scaling up (or out) strategies that prioritise building up grassroots institutions and providing support for local initiatives; processes perhaps best summarised, borrowing the title of Julie Fisher's promised second volume, as 'cultivating civil society'.

NGO maximalists—*The Road from Rio* provides a pertinent example—see the support provided by NGOs to GROs as already impacting very positively on grassroots politics, and envision a longer-term snowball or ripple effect with local mobilisation progressively influencing national power structures as well. Empirical studies, however, provide little evidence that this NGO-animated political mobilisation of nascent civil societies is either occurring, or is even likely to occur. The problem, essentially, can be defined as a relatively low level of NGO integration into the civil societies of the South, with INGOs and SNGOs alike still generally defined as inherently outside forces. Interviews con-

ducted for example, in rural Zimbabwe by Vivian and Maseko clearly indicated 'that NGOs are unlikely to be acting as the "voice of the people" in a literal sense' Specifically,

'people were very puzzled to be asked for their opinions about what NGOs ought to do ... the beneficiaries of NGO projects clearly felt that they were not in a position to tell NGOs what to do, although they were glad to accept the services NGOs offered'⁵.

Interviewees, similarly, did not see NGOs as representatives of local interests. 'The idea that NGOs represented their interests to others did not seem to be one that made any sense to the NGO beneficiaries who were interviewed.' Nor have NGOs got anyone but themselves to blame for this situation, since, despite much rhetoric about 'participation and 'empowerment', the available evidence suggests that there is probably little more variation in the extent to which power is decentralised within contemporary NGOs than there was between the European political parties studied by Roberto Michels as a prelude to formulating his 'iron law', or, more properly, iron tendency towards organisational oligarchy. The general NGO pattern, to which there are exceptions, is one of planning and policy-making dominated by staff members, with local groups involved, if at all, at the stage of implementation.

Interestingly, Vivian and Maseko also asked their Zimbabwean interviewees about their attitudes toward NGOs, significantly finding that

the same people had strong ideas about government policies and programmes; they readily expressed their opinions about what government ought to do, although this was offset by the fact that people seldom seemed to think that they could have any influence over government even at the village level. *This shows a sense of identity (albeit powerless) with government that does not seem to be there with NGOs*⁶.

All this, of course, beyond highlighting the many problems that NGOs must solve if they are successfully to 'cultivate civil society', also confirms the enduring prudence of 'cultivating government' as a policy strategy, and underlines why so many NGOs do cooperate with the GOs that they also, and often rightly, criticise. For, if scaling up is to be defined primarily in terms of the maximalisation of developmental impacts, then it is hard to disagree with Farrington and Bebbington's antipathy to NGO go-it-alone strategies. 'Perhaps the most significant implications of their experience lie in the lesson: they generate that have potential for being scaled up by governments' (p 183).

In practice, of course, many NGOs sensibly refuse to put their eggs in any one scaling up basket, pursuing a variety of what Edwards and Hulme term, summarising the case study evidence presented in *Making a Difference*, 'different strategy mixes', in their search for combinations that 'offer the possibility of mutual re-inforcement' (p 215). Despite Edwards and Hulme's disclaimer that 'scaling up NGO impact is not synonymous with expanding the staff and budgets of NGOs' (p 216), this probably remains the most tempting option for those SNGOs operating in what *Reluctant Partners?* refers to as the 'buyer's market' (p 188) of abundant donor funding. Indeed the frequency with which governments in the South describe many of their national NGOs either as agents of donor interests or as undermining the national interest—often citing widespread tendencies to utilise NGO status as a method of tax evasion or as a cover for commercial usually import-related, activity—would suggest there may be a case for assuming that self-interested activities and self-aggrandising strategies among NGOs are now becoming increasingly common.

Alternatively, of course, such complaints may tell us more about the frustrations of states suffering from the chronic weaknesses engendered by the ravages of structural adjustment than they do about NGO behaviour. Clearly this is a subject that is likely to

continue to pose interesting questions to NGO researchers, not least because the chronic problems of resource-starved states are increasingly frequently now associated with the more acute problems of state collapse associated with what Jon Bennett, in his wide-ranging, disturbing, and challenging Introduction to the recently published *Meeting Needs*, terms 'so-called complex emergencies—the interwoven results of war, politics, economics, famine and often refugees ...' (p xiii). Putting aside the long-term issues raised by Bennett—notably his argument (following Mark Duffield) that 'relief, as a policy model, is a form of disengagement from the South' (p xiv)—it is already clear that the short and medium-term impacts of these trends have been very profound, notably due to the fact that emergency aid is invariably channelled more heavily even than conventional development aid towards NGOs and away from governments. As John Borton's case study of Ethiopia underlines (p 28), this practice dates rather precisely from the Ethiopian famine of 1984–85, with donor-NGO sub-contracting arrangements spreading and multiplying rapidly thereafter.

It is Bennett's contention that the number of complex emergencies occurring 'in the 1990s has increased beyond the capacity of existing response systems' (p xiii). Although NGOs, unconstrained by the restrictions of sovereignty, had developed sophisticated capacities for delivering cross-border relief from the late 1970s, the complexities and massive scale of recent emergencies has meant that '[i]ncreasingly, NGOs are being sucked into a foreign policy vacuum with which they are ill-equipped to deal' (p xix). Despite the fact that the UN has now developed an integrated approach to complex emergencies, its specialist humanitarian agencies lack the capacity to implement their own emergency programmes. 'NGOs were thus thrust to the fore as agencies who ... would carry out the actual relief programmes' (p xvii). Accordingly, as the eight informative case studies in *Meeting Needs* variously attest, relief NGOs autonomously developed appropriate coping strategies to deal with the unique demands of each individual complex emergency, most notably evolving, in each case, *ad hoc* and situationally specific, but also generally effective, inter-organisational coordination arrangements at field level.

These coordination arrangements, however, defy generalisation and therefore do not indicate possibilities for simple replication and extension. Whilst Bennett makes a convincing case for the potential that field-based NGO coordination structures possess to incorporate not only 'small local NGOs' but also 'at least some of the voiceless majority they serve' (p xxi), that developmental potential, as the book's case studies attest, is not easy for relief agencies to realise under the extreme pressures engendered by complex emergencies. 'Much has been said about involving refugees, for instance, in the decisions that affect their lives, yet very few lasting structures have been created to ensure that this is not simply rhetorical good sense' (p xxi). Moreover, apart from the obvious problems of turning relief into development that this overt 'civil society' strategy demands, it is noticeable that the unusual degree of leeway and policy-making autonomy that NGOs achieve due to bilateral and multilateral donors' characteristically hands-off stance in emergency relief situations, immediately engenders paranoid reactions from host governments, if, as in the Kenya case covered by Monika Kathina Juma, the latter have any strength left to react and respond.

An alternative interpretation, therefore, might see somewhat greater importance accorded to the influence of the relief NGOs' earlier cross-border activities and 'working in conflict' precedents on the emergence of a post-Cold War UN; an organisation that now negotiates 'with warring parties and ... [has] accepted ... the principle of working in conflict' (p xvii). From this perspective *Meeting Needs* provides a series of sidelights on NGO-UN interactions in the specific context of emergency and relief operations that complement the detailed series of well integrated essays on NGOs in the wider UN system in the more comprehensive survey and analysis of this subject soon to be

published in *'The Conscience of the World'*. Indeed, since it is the latter's explicit aim, as the editor Peter Willetts puts it, 'to demonstrate that UN politics cannot be understood without assessing the impact of NGOs on each issue' (p 11), that impact can already be seen as well established in relation to complex emergencies. What the essays in *'The Conscience of the World'* establish more widely is the extent to which the UN now depends on NGOs for 'agenda-setting, policy-making and implementation of policy' (p 11) across the whole range of its activities. However, as Peter Willetts is careful to point out in his Introduction, 'the balance between the three types of activity varies quite considerably' (p 11) according to the issue area, with the evidence presented indicating that NGO influence over UN activities and behaviour is rarely as comprehensive and as decisive as it appears to have been in the field of complex emergencies. 'Changing the agenda for debate is their most important impact on politics' (p 11) in the UN system, Peter Willetts suggests: hence the volume's title *'The Conscience of the World'*.

There is much meat in this volume, including two chapters on the early history of international NGOs and their integration into the post-war UN system. Peter Willett's informative introductory overview, and John Sankey's to-the-point conclusion, collectively underline both the very rapid growth of NGO numbers and significance in the UN system, and the important fact that the road from Rio leads not simply to Beijing but to a host of committees and much effective work behind the scenes.

Whatever the formal rights of NGOs in a particular conference or committee, the informal situation is usually more favourable. NGOs often make a more effective contribution when the forum is smaller and less public, and neither governments nor NGOs need to play to the gallery (p 273).

This point is more fully substantiated in seven detailed case-study chapters examining NGO/UN interactions 'from three different perspectives, UN agencies, policy-making and particular individual NGOs' (p 11). Of the two UN agencies considered, the chapter on the World Bank is of more direct relevance to the developmental concerns of this review, but this reviewer also found Richard Hoggart's memoir on UNESCO fascinating. Comparably direct relevance is maintained in the policy-making chapters covering environmental policy, women's rights, and the rights of the child, as well as the two NGO-perspective chapters on Amnesty International and Save the Children.

Overall, of course, what emerges most clearly from *'The Conscience of the World'* is the extent to which the NGO voices heard most loudly and most often in New York, Washington and Geneva remain Northern ones, dominated by INGOs in general and BINGOs in particular, and with financial constraints limiting the involvement of SNGOs in most UN activities. This provides a timely reminder that, as the NGO collectivity has expanded and diversified, it has become increasingly dangerous to generalise about either sectoral trends or impacts without risking the possibility of underestimating the diversity of experience exhibited by a vast range of organisations operating under comparably diverse conditions and circumstances in both South and North. It may, therefore, safely be suggested that, on the evidence provided by the volumes here reviewed, NGOs can most profitably continue to be perceived as potentially either or both independent and dependent variables in the politics of development. For example, the image of 'donors ... scrambling over each other so as to be able to finance what they think are the "good" NGOs' should properly be counterbalanced by an appreciation of the fact that, for those SNGOs operating in unfashionable countries or pursuing unfashionable activities, contemporary reality more commonly involves the 'need to continually "scramble and search" for a partner or a funding source'⁷. Accordingly, it is perhaps prudent to conclude this review on a tentative note, posing, but not answering, what Julie Fisher calls

the central question ... whether NGOs are institutionally and politically sustainable in the long run and whether, therefore, they will be able to make a major contribution to the worldwide crises of poverty, environmental degradation, and population growth (p 7).

Notes

¹ W Postma, 'NGO Partnership and Institutional Development: Making it Real, Making it Intentional', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 28(3), 1994, p 450, p 468 fn.6.

² As quoted in I Smillie, 'Changing Partners: Northern NGOs, Northern Governments' in I Smillie & H Helmich (eds), *Non-Governmental Organisations and Governments: Stakeholders for Development*, Paris, OECD, 1993, p 13.

³ Postma, 'NGO Partnership', p. 464.

⁴ S. Wiggins & E Cromwell, 'NGOs and Seed Provision to Smallholders in Developing Countries', *World Development*, 23(3), 1995, p 415.

⁵ J Vivian & G Maseko, 'NGOs, Participation and Rural Development: Testing the Assumptions with Evidence from Zimbabwe', *UNRISD Discussion Paper DP 49*, January 1994, p 13.

⁶ Ibid, p 13 (emphasis added).

⁷ Postma, 'NGO Partnership', p 467.

A global labour market: World Development Report 1995

Leen Boer and Ad Koekkoek¹

The World Bank's 1995 World Development Report² (WDR) deals with labour. It investigates which development strategies are right for employees (people in paid employment, self-employed, etc.), considers the opportunities and threats that globalisation entails, deals with the role of government in the labour market and that of labour unions, and asks which policy options are best for employees in regions confronted with major structural changes. The Report's overall message is one of rapid change, ceaselessly widening and deepening integration, and ensuing uncertainty. Optimism prevails.

Labour-friendly development strategies

Economic growth is good for labour. This is the basic message of the 1995 WDR. Growth is good for labour because the evidence shows—in rich industrialized countries, and in the past few decades in particular also in East Asia—that along with the market-oriented growth employment grew, labour productivity rose and real wages increased. The role of government in this market-oriented development process is a central, albeit facilitating, one. To achieve such beneficent growth, demand for labour is essential. It is implied that the market will take care of that, if let free. Investments in training, infrastructure, and capital goods are needed to raise labour productivity. Yet, the relationships between such investments and increasing productivity are far from simple. The relationship of increasing productivity with human capital appears to be weaker than that with physical capital. It does not follow, however, that investments in human capital are less important to growth. The fact that households tend to go on investing in education even in economies in which distortions make investments in physical capital less attractive, explains the weaker relationship.

low- and medium-income countries, says the Report, public action in the labour market is justified. It may complement community arrangements by improving the environment in which informal workers operate. Examples given are the provision of water and sanitation, roads and drainage. Governments may also protect vulnerable groups in the formal sector. Societies intervene when unfettered labour markets fail to deliver the most efficient outcomes, or when they want to move market outcomes into line with their preferences and values. However, this acknowledgement raises many questions. There are many degrees of market failure. Most people will call it a market failure if the food market slumps in a famine as food becomes unaffordable for large parts of the population. Even then, a food hoarder and speculator will be tempted to give a more positive appreciation of the market's functioning. In most cases the situation is less clear. Markets are being troubled by more or by less distortions (almost never by none). One of the questions raised, therefore, is who decides that the market is not functioning properly, and for whom. Another question is how certain social preferences and values come to be favoured over others. We do not know of any political system that produces a really common societal preference, also not with regard to labour market outcomes. In addition to economic distortions, there are political ones. Of course, there is a certain correspondence between economic inequality and the distribution of political power.

The WDR rightly observes that the majority of employees in developing countries work in the rural and informal sectors (80% in low-income countries and 40% in medium-income countries). The Report points out that these employees are often outside the reach of direct government intervention. Even in the modern sector, it says, regulations are often not enforced. Insufficient attention for the political dimension also typifies this part of the Report on government policies and the formal and informal economies. There is insufficient reference to the negative effects on the informal sector of unbalanced regulation. Other analysts would turn the argument around, claiming that informality is often the very result of excessive or unbalanced government intervention in the form of excessively high standards and preferential treatment for certain groups, regions, or sectors. Of course, such unequal treatment tends to reflect the distribution of political power. It is remarkable for a report on global integration to show so little understanding of the very deep interconnectiveness between the formal and informal economies.

The Report contains a careful consideration of the role of government in regulating child labour and a well-balanced analysis of the benefits and drawbacks of social conditionality in international trade. The role of labour unions is also dealt with thoughtfully. In this case the political dimension does get attention: i.e. the political vanguard role that labour unions often play in the democratisation process.

Policy options in an age of major change

The Report points out that employees suffer more than capital when economies collapse. Capital is, after all, more mobile. There is little choice in case of economic collapse. Adjustments have to be made. The policy options relate to the beginning of the adjustment process, its speed, and the sequence of its components. The real exchange rate is considered to be crucial to the adjustment process. Here the 'political economy' of reform is paid attention to. The acquisition of social and political support and credibility is indeed crucial. It is estimated that these reforms involve a total of almost 1.5 billion employees, one billion of whom are in China, India, and Vietnam.

The pros and cons of gradual as opposed to rapid change are examined. As might be expected, the WDR makes a plea not to delay or postpone necessary reforms. It sees recapturing sustained growth as the key to successful transformation. The Report points to examples in Africa: per-capita economic growth in Tanzania grew from - 3% in

1981–1985 to + 1% in 1986–1991; and per-capita income in Ghana has grown by 2% per year since 1983, following a fall of one-third in the 1970s. However, figures concerning African economies have to be regarded with some caution.

Religious tract or analysis?

The WDR is optimistic about the future. In the recent past, many people have succeeded in finding work, and average productivity has risen. This evidently inspires confidence in the future. Although the Report reminds us that the number of people on the labour market will increase from 2.5 to 3.7 billion in the next thirty years, there is no reasoned account of whether the labour market will be able to absorb this rapid growth, and if so how. The Report refers to the danger of growing inequality between rich and poor and of increasingly severe poverty. However, it believes that the tide can be turned by a combination of favourable international circumstances, governments creating the right conditions, and employees making rational choices.

It is unclear how the state of the environment fits into this picture. If environmental degradation is caused by poverty, economic growth that is translated into poverty reduction may have positive consequences for the environment. If growth is achieved by promoting polluting industries, the opposite applies. Consumer preferences change as income increases. Growth absorbs scarce resources. Altogether, there is no clear relation between economic growth and the state of the environment, but environmental developments in some of the fastest growing Asian economies should be taken as a warning.

The technology factor is also seriously neglected. In the context of globalisation, the Report refers to the role of technological development in increasing transport and communication opportunities, while also reducing their costs. However, the direct consequences of the information technology for the labour market are ignored. In recent years, the information revolution, robotisation and automation have—with seemingly increasing speed—changed the structure of the labour market. Occupations disappear, while new ones appear. Quite often people who lost their job as a consequence, do not get the new jobs. The changes brought about by the information technology seem far from having reached an end. Opinions on the longer term results diverge. Some commentators foresee a drastic fall in demand for labour, not only in manufacturing and agriculture but also in important parts of the service sector.¹ Mass unemployment is the picture they sketch for the future. Others are of the opinion that it will not come to that and that the labour market will create new job opportunities. Whatever the effects of these technologies, the 1995 World Development Report pays them no heed. In general, the analysis is somewhat below par, especially in terms of the reasoning and substantiation of its arguments. As a result, at times the Report makes a somewhat dogmatic, if not evangelical impression.

Notes

¹ The authors are at the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate General for International Cooperation. The article reflects the authors' personal views.

² The World Bank, *World Development Report 1995: Workers in an integrating world*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

³ An example is *Jobs study: facts, analysis, strategies* (OECD, Paris 1994, p 28). For other approaches, see Adrian Wood, *North-South Trade, Employment and Inequality: Changing Fortunes in a Skill-Driven World*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994, and Stephanie Flanders and Martin Wolf, 'Haunted by the trade spectre', *Financial Times*, 24 July 1995).

⁴ Cf Jeremy Rifkin, *The end of work: The decline of the global labor force and the dawn of the post-market era*. New York: GP Putnam's Sons, 1995).

COMMUNICATION TO THE EDITOR

The TWQ Feature Review in Volume 15 Number 4 (November 1994) by Leslie Wolf-Phillips reviewed *Zulfi Bhutto of Pakistan: his life and times* by Professor Stanley Wolpert; whilst acknowledging Wolf-Phillips review as admirable and incisive, I would like to add something to it.

Wolpert has taken great pains to dwell at length on Bhutto's alleged sexuality and amorousness and, in particular, chose a Karachi socialite, Husna Shaikh as the focus and highlight of Bhutto's private life. I knew Bhutto as a friend, and professionally as his dentist, and I was aware of the trickeries of his detractors. This review gives me the opportunity to place on record certain facts and to put Husna Shaikh and her life and times into perspective.

Husna Shaikh came into prominence during Bhutto's trial (1977 - 1979); we had heard very little of this social butterfly during Bhutto's tenure of office as President and then Prime Minister (1971 - 1977). This timing was not surprising as the military dictatorship of General Zia ul-Haq spared no effort to damage and discredit the reputation of Bhutto, the popularly-elected Prime Minister who was deposed and illegally imprisoned. When I once mentioned to Bhutto in prison that all sorts of rumours were going around about an alleged relationship with Husna Shaikh, he was quick to retort, 'If a woman claims closeness to a Prime Minister who is going to verify it?'

Husna Shaikh was seen hob-nobbing with the power elite of Bhutto's government and frequently attended 'jet-set' parties together with other socialites of Karachi. If Wolpert's own description and assessment of Bhutto is to be consistently applied, he would not have tolerated a lady close to him, let alone his 'wife', to socialise so brazenly or to have assignations with his ministers.

Husna Shaikh was never seen in the precincts of official quarters or at important official functions in Islamabad. After the fall of Bhutto, she moved into the palaces of Gulf State ruler and claimed close links with the local ruling elite. She never claimed any legacy as a rightful heir to Bhutto's property or to his political heritage as his former 'wife'. From the internal evidence of his book, Wolpert seems to have spent a great deal of time with known adversaries of Bhutto, the book is indeed part-dedicated to Ardeshir Cowasjee, whose long standing hatred for Bhutto continues to obsess him, an opportunity to pour out venom is never missed.

It is evident that Cowasjee and his like have provided all the juicy material from their sexual fantasies, which, it seems, is the favourite pastime of the ageing business elite of Karachi.

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Islam and Christian Muslim Relations

GENERAL EDITOR

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Islam and Christian Muslim Relations (ICMR) was launched in June 1990 and has been hailed by scholars of Islam, Christianity and religion in general as well as by social scientists, educationists, community and religious leaders. Interest has come from a great variety of Christians and Muslims eager to understand the problems, chances and successes experienced in Christian-Muslim coexistence.

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1996 - Volume 7 (3 issues). ISSN 0959-6410.

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The nation-state and underdevelopment

ALAN CARTER

The most coherent interpretation of Marx's theory of revolutionary change—that of G A Cohen¹—claims, in its barest essentials, that technological development selects economic relations which are functional for further technological development, and that the economic relations select a political structure which is functional for stabilising them. However, it can be argued that this stands the world on its head. Rather, a political structure selects economic relations that further technological development because that is functional for the political structure in so far as it is a precondition for developing its defensive capability.² I refer to this alternative theory of revolutionary transformation as the State-Primacy Theory. According to this alternative theoretical perspective, state actors' perceptions of their interests determine the economic relations which come to prevail.

The State-Primacy Theory might provide an explanation for the outcome of revolutions in Europe, but isn't it wholly unsuited to accounting for political and economic developments in the Third World? Obviously, many assume, the major actors there are transnational corporations (TNCs), which often have turnovers exceeding the gross national products of many Third World countries. Consequently, states in less developed countries (LDCs) seem powerless to prevent these giant corporations from plundering their resources and polluting their lands. Isn't this an obvious case where the State-Primacy Theory is clearly wrong? Isn't it transparent that it is transnationals within the global economy that determine what states do, rather than state interests explaining the nature of the global economy?

Global inequality is, certainly, of fundamental importance. And it can be argued that, by repatriating profits, TNCs increase poverty in the Third World, while adding to the excessive affluence of the rich nations. But are we really sure of the actual dynamic that lies behind all this? In short, what theoretical perspective will best clarify Third World political and economic developments? The most influential work from a 'bourgeois' perspective has undoubtedly been *Political Order in Changing Societies* by Samuel Huntington.³ Huntington's approach is best seen as falling within the tradition of elite theory. However, in opposition to 'bourgeois' approaches there arose a 'neo-Marxist' critique emphasising 'the development of underdevelopment' or dependency in Third World countries. This became the orthodoxy of the Left in the 1970s and is best viewed as falling within the tradition of class theory, as its primary focus is on exploitation. Both views have since proved to be inadequate.⁴ Unfortunately, at present there is no widely-held, alternative theoretical perspective that seems

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capable of providing a satisfactory account of significant developments in the Third World.⁵

In what follows I argue that much of what Huntington claims is correct, while much of it is inadequate. Similarly, I argue that much of what the underdevelopment theorists claim is correct, while much of it, too, is inadequate. Most importantly, I argue that, by omitting the inadequate claims of both positions, while accommodating their positive features within a general theory of revolutionary change,⁶ the State-Primacy Theory, in effect, sublates them both. And the reason why such a sublation has not been widely developed is because the vitriolic opposition between supporters of elite theory and class theory has obstructed any meaningful synthesis of these seemingly antithetical standpoints.

Thesis: an elite theory approach

Let me commence with Huntington's political realism, which was a response to the unwarranted optimism of modernisation theory. The assumption had been that societies contained traditional and modern sectors—the 'dualist hypothesis'—and that they were moving from being predominantly 'traditional' to being predominantly 'modern'. Although the goal was, apparently, to bring about liberal democracies in the developing world, it had been recognised that this process of 'modernisation' could be facilitated by an authoritarian elite that might decide to retain power.⁷ Nevertheless, among modernisation theorists it was widely assumed that there did exist a general process of transition towards pluralist, democratic polities built upon developed, capitalist economic relations. In other words, the assumption was that economic modernisation would bring in its train political modernisation and the stability characteristic of the advanced Western democracies.

The problem of modernisation

In the 1960s this optimism was shattered by the growth of authoritarian regimes and revolutionary struggles in the Third World. Huntington's response was to point out the destabilising effects of transition and to indicate the contrasting stability of both undeveloped and developed societies. Whereas both traditional and modern societies were stable, transitional societies were highly unstable. Huntington's principal thesis is that major violence and instability is 'in large part the product of rapid social change and the rapid mobilization of new groups into politics coupled with the low development of political institutions'.⁸ The failure of modernisation theory can thus be attributed to a disjunction between economic and political development, for although economic 'modernisation' involves the breakdown of the traditional polity, it does not always result in a modern political order.

Huntington therefore accepts a version of the dualist hypothesis, but adds that a transition from a pre-modern to a modern society is likely to result in violence and disorder. And this leads him to some rather drastic conclusions: for example, that reform can be destabilising and can lead to revolution.⁹ One implication that

some might draw from this is that it is better to put up with a reactionary, authoritarian regime than to risk any reform that could prove to be destabilising.

However, Huntington does not, in fact, simply reject all revolutions. They are sometimes necessary to bring about a stable polity:

The successful revolution combines rapid political mobilization and rapid political institutionalization. Not all revolutions produce a new political order. The measure of how revolutionary a revolution is is the rapidity and the scope of the expansion of political participation. The measure of how successful a revolution is is the authority and stability of the institutions to which it gives birth.¹⁰

Nevertheless, although there are successful revolutions occasionally, failed attempts at producing a stable modern society are common.

One such failure is what Huntington refers to as a 'praetorian' society, where different groups become politicised in 'the absence of effective political institutions capable of mediating, refining, and moderating group political action'.¹¹ The result is a society where 'social forces confront each other nakedly',¹² and various direct methods are employed for influencing political outcomes:

Each group employs means which reflect its peculiar nature and capabilities. The wealthy bribe; students riot; workers strike; mobs demonstrate; and the military coup. In the absence of accepted procedures, all these forms of direct action are found on the political scene. The techniques of military intervention are simply more dramatic and effective than the others because, as Hobbes put it, 'When nothing else is turned up, clubs are trumps.'¹³

When there is no consensus, when social groups do not accept constraints on their action, then governments will ultimately have to resort to force. And the problem arises because, as a result of economic modernisation, new social groups emerge with rising expectations and come to demand political participation. But they cannot be incorporated into the polity because of its undeveloped political institutions. And given that the prevailing elite will wish to restrict any such participation, praetorian societies are especially violent, conflictual and authoritarian. Nevertheless, although Huntington identifies praetorian societies as a pitfall on the road to development, his goal is clearly the attainment of modern liberal democracies.

The priority of order

One problem with Huntington's approach is that, while he regards political modernisation as involving 'the rationalization of authority, the differentiation of structures, and the expansion of political participation',¹⁴ he assumes that it is necessary to bring all these things about in the order in which he lists them:

The primary problem is not liberty but the creation of a legitimate public order. Men may, of course, have order without liberty, but they cannot have liberty without order. Authority has to exist before it can be limited, and it is authority that is in scarce supply in those modernizing countries where government is at the mercy of alienated intellectuals, rambunctious colonels, and rioting students.¹⁵

But, it can be objected, even if political authority were a priority, that is not to

say that it must come chronologically prior. It is a *non sequitur* to argue that, as one cannot have limited authority without having authority, then one must first of all have authority and then limit it. This is obviously fallacious, as it is logically possible to begin with limited authority. It is simply confused to claim *a priori* that authority *must* be established prior to its being constrained.

Huntington nevertheless presumes precisely that the powerful state must come not just first in importance, but first in temporal order. In his view, power must first be concentrated so as to transform the traditional society. Then the system must evolve in order to assimilate those demanding participation. Finally, political checks and a wider dispersion of power are demanded.¹⁶ However, one obvious problem with this strategy is that if power is centralised and concentrated first, it will come as no surprise if those exerting that power are able to remain in control and become exceedingly authoritarian in order to do so.

Yet Huntington is well aware of the problems of military intervention. In fact, he describes three types of military coup. The breakthrough coup is when a group of army officers—usually young, educated, westernised officers—seize power in order to rid society of a traditional monarch who is holding up modernisation. Such officers identify with the newly emerging middle classes, which arise as a result of capitalist development. A guardian coup usually occurs later when an incompetent or corrupt middle class government is in crisis. After a short while, perhaps, the military allows new elections and a return to civilian government. The veto coup occurs when those who constitute a new social force, perhaps the workers or the peasants, seek political power and elect an administration sympathetic to them. The new administration is then deposed by the military because the latter seeks to protect the middle class interests it identifies with. Clearly, at this point, the military is preventing an increase in political participation and has become overtly reactionary in Huntington's own terms.¹⁷

However, Huntington also argues that the expansion of democracy in the Third World will lead rural groups to elect into power those who will back agrarian rather than industrial development.¹⁸ As this is not in the interests of a modernising military, it is not surprising that it should engage in a veto coup in order to preserve the system it prefers. Interestingly, all of this is consistent with the State-Primacy Theory, which claims that states select economic relations that are in their perceived interests, for it would be surprising if military officers valuing a 'modern' economy were to allow rural groups to impede industrial development, especially when such development is required for the military to 'modernise' its equipment. More interestingly still, numerous veto coups are just what Huntington's own theory would lead one to expect.

Thus, even on the basis of his own argument, Huntington's whole strategy of first centralising power before expanding participation seems of necessity to lead to military regimes seizing control. And this means that his approach to modernisation has extremely reactionary implications. Rather than offer us some prospect of liberal democracy, it seems to lead us only in the direction of dictatorship. It is not surprising, therefore, that those who had hoped for Third World polities to take the form of Western liberal democracies should have come to feel so despondent in the 1970s. What is more, the whole 'bourgeois' approach is seriously flawed, not only in its prescription for how to

create a liberal order but also in its failure to theorise growing global inequality.

Antithesis: a class theory approach

Let me now turn to a major critique of 'bourgeois' approaches—namely, underdevelopment theory, which emerged in the late 1960s. This takes far greater cognisance of international linkages, and emphasises the systemic inequality in the global economy, focusing on the sustained exploitation of the less developed areas by the more developed. As capitalism consists of a world system—a view made famous by Immanuel Wallerstein—it is inadequate to focus upon any country in isolation.

Developing underdevelopment

Wallerstein refers to the relation between developed and less developed areas as one of core and periphery. As a result of concentrating on manufacturing industry, and as a consequence of the forms of labour specialisation and organisation associated with it, the countries of Western Europe were able to develop a relatively strong form of state. It is these countries, along with the USA, which form the core. In contrast, the less developed regions adopted a form of production which required relatively little skill. Thus they became the exporters of primary products and form the periphery. But because the core countries have strong state machines, they are able to extract surplus from the weaker regions at the periphery, and this leads to the further strength of the core states and the increased weakness of the periphery. For example, thanks to their strong position, the core states can impose terms of trade on the peripheral areas which are to the advantage of the core. Hence, capitalist development does not develop the peripheral regions, but weakens and exploits them, widening global economic and social differences.¹⁹

André Gunder Frank describes the relationship between the advanced areas and the less developed in a slightly different way, using the terms 'metropolis' and 'satellite'. In his view, capitalism involves a worldwide system of exchange where monopolies in the metropolis have become dominant and are able to exploit the satellites. Thus, surplus is continually extracted from various satellites by the metropolis, leading to a progressive polarisation between the developed parts of the world (the metropolis) and the underdeveloped parts (the satellites).

Frank goes on to argue that not only is the relation between the developed parts of the world and the less developed a metropolis/satellite relationship, but also that each satellite is itself a metropolis, of a kind, with its own respective satellites. And perhaps they too have their own satellites. The model is, thus, one of a chain of linkages with a major metropolis at the centre, which feeds off the surplus from a number of satellites, each a sub-metropolis, as it were, which in turn extracts surplus from its satellites. As Frank puts it, capitalism 'generates at once economic development and underdevelopment on international, national, local and sectoral levels'.²⁰

The result of all this is that the satellites are starved of capital and stagnate or even decay, while the advanced countries have an even greater surplus to invest and can therefore develop very quickly. In a word, Frank does not see capitalism as developing the satellites, but as 'underdeveloping' them. And whereas 'undevelopment' signifies that a region has simply failed to develop 'underdevelopment' means that it has been inhibited from developing or has even regressed because of persistent exploitation by the metropolis. In short what modernisation theory has regarded as development, Frank sees as 'the development of underdevelopment'. Thus, the backwardness of underdeveloped countries is not the result of any internal deficiency. Rather, it is international capitalism which is responsible. Clearly, this is in stark contrast to modernisation theory.

One consequence of all this is that if satellites do ever develop, then they will 'experience their greatest economic development if and when their ties to their metropolis are weakest'.²¹ And apparent confirmatory evidence of the hypothesis that development only occurs in poor areas when they are de-linked from the rest of the world system comes from those periods of 'temporary isolation caused by the crises of war or depression in the world metropolis'.²² As Frank believes that it was because of 'the consequent loosening of trade and investment ties during these periods' that 'the satellites initiated marked autonomous industrialization and growth',²³ he concludes that breaking these links is the prerequisite for genuine development in the poor regions.

In fact, the exploitation of satellites by the metropolis has been taking place since the 16th century, in Frank's view—from the time of the Spanish and Portuguese conquests of South America. As it is difficult to regard the internal relations of production within 16th century Latin America as 'capitalist', Frank claims that any region which is linked in any way to the world market is part of the capitalist system and is, thereby, capitalist.²⁴ And he supports this claim by showing how the internal economies of Latin America have been significantly shaped by the effects of capitalist penetration.

What this implies is that, given that all regions are tied to the international capitalist system and given that all sectors of each region are similarly tied, there is little point in arguing for further capitalist development. The whole world is now, in a sense, capitalist. The solution, instead, is to seize control of the Third World state in a revolution and de-link from the exploitative capitalist world system. Only then will capital no longer be drained away and development become possible.²⁵ For both Frank and Wallerstein, then, capitalism is regarded as a global system of exploitation, which must be radically transformed if genuine development is to take place.

Underdevelopment or dependent development?

However, as some areas of the Third World have clearly undergone development, it is not surprising that underdevelopment theory has been subject to criticism. It has been vehemently opposed on the Left by those who prefer a 'classical' Marxist approach—the most influential being Bill Warren.²⁶ 'Classical' Marxists have always viewed capitalism as progressive in so far as it

supposedly develops the material preconditions for a highly abundant socialism. Consequently, underdevelopment theory, in claiming that certain regions will simply not develop, poses a threat. However, the fact that some areas in the Third World have developed fails to refute the general thrust of underdevelopment theory. For example, a sub-metropolis might have developed because less capital was transferred out of it than it extracted from its satellites. But this would provide no grounds for thinking that its satellites would be able to develop. Quite possibly, the development of the newly industrialising countries (NICs) has been purchased at the price of a greater underdevelopment of the hinterland they themselves directly or indirectly exploit.

Nevertheless, the fact that some development has been observed in certain regions has led to a modification of underdevelopment theory—namely, dependency theory. As F H Cardoso writes: '*dependency, monopoly capitalism and development* are not contradictory terms: there occurs a kind of *dependent capitalist development* in the sectors of the Third World integrated into the new forms of monopolistic expansion'.²⁷ In other words, there is, occasionally, development in the poorer areas, but the development that takes place there is skewed because of the influence of international capital. Moreover, Third World states are seen as dependent states, serving international capital. This is thought to be the case even with military dictatorships, although Cardoso acknowledges that 'new political analyses are needed to explain the bureaucratic-technocratic form of authoritarian state which serves the interests of the internationalized bourgeoisie and their allies'.²⁸

The centrality of the state

But is it acceptable to regard Third World states as mere instruments of international capital? As Warren emphasises:

Third World states have shown the ability to take punitive action against foreign firms located in their territories, eg the forcible nationalization of oil in Iraq, Egypt's nationalization of the Suez Canal, Uganda's ... takeover of British assets, the often unilaterally declared acquisition of majority share-holdings in foreign firms, such as timber and mining in Ghana.²⁹

Moreover, 'The potential threat of such punitive action is often just as effective, and probably more often used, than the action itself'.³⁰ Furthermore, Third World states have called for a New International Economic Order, have attempted to reduce the amount of capital transferred out of their countries, have formed agreements among themselves concerning the trade in commodities they export, and have imposed numerous constraints on transnational corporations. For example, as Stephen Krasner observes: 'Governments have promulgated rules regarding the establishment of affiliates, repatriation of profits, debt financing, transfer payments, employment of nationals, disclosure of information, and tax rates'.³¹ All these actions are patently inconsistent with the view that the Third World state is merely an instrument of international capital.

On the other hand, if Third World economies have expanded most rapidly

when the imperialist chain has been severed, why do they not remain de-linked? That the chain is reformed when the metropolis is no longer in a political or economic crisis surely demonstrates that the Third World state is not an instrument of indigenous capital either, when re-linking leads to the transfer of capital from the satellite to the metropolis. In addition, states in LDCs have often deliberately encouraged the incursion of transnational capital to the detriment of indigenous capital, which is something an instrument of indigenous capital obviously would not do.

But there are further and far more serious problems with viewing the state as a mere instrument of the economy or, more specifically, of classes. As Teodor Shanin points out, states have, occasionally, 'produced class structures, transformed them, or made them disappear, as when a bourgeoisie or a peasantry has been created by deliberate state policy, as in Kenya, Pakistan, Tanzania, or Brazil'.³² What this entails is that, if states choose to support new economic relations that will give rise to a new dominant class, *states cannot possibly be the instrument of the present dominant class*, whatever it is taken to be. Shanin's examples clearly demonstrate the inadequacy of any instrumentalist theory of the state—precisely the theory that, by and large, pervades Marxism and which is especially evident in underdevelopment theory and dependency theory.

How, then, are we to theorise the state, if not as an instrument of the dominant class? Marxism has, for the most part, reduced the interests of the modern state to those of the bourgeoisie. At best, it has regarded the state as having a 'relative autonomy'. However, as Wallerstein acknowledges: 'To be a partly autonomous entity, there must be a group of people whose direct interests are served by such an entity: state managers and a state bureaucracy'.³³ But if state actors have interests of their own, why assume that the state is only partly autonomous? The state could act in the interests of a particular class even if it were fully autonomous. For instance, it would do so when its own independent interests corresponded with those of that class. Of course, the state could not be more than partly autonomous unless it had the power to pursue its own interests. But Wallerstein evidently believes that core states have considerable power, for he claims that 'the development of strong states in the core areas of the European world was an essential component of the development of modern capitalism'.³⁴ Nevertheless, he explicitly rejects the view that states in the periphery are of much significance.³⁵

Some theorists working within the Marxist tradition have realised that this will not do at all. Instead, they have argued that states in the periphery are extremely powerful with respect to their internal economic relations. Consider Hamza Alavi, who argues that the task of the metropolitan bourgeoisie in the colony is:

to create [a] state apparatus through which it can exercise dominion over *all* the indigenous social classes in the colony. It might be said that the "superstructure" in the colony is therefore "over-developed" in relation to the "structure" in the colony, for its basis lies in the metropolitan structure itself, from which it is later separated at the time of independence ... At the moment of independence weak indigenous bourgeoisies find themselves enmeshed in bureaucratic controls by which those at the top of the hierarchy of the bureaucratic-military apparatus of the state are able

to maintain and even extend their dominant power in society, being freed from direct metropolitan control.³⁶

This is certainly an improvement on Wallerstein, who, like other underdevelopment and dependency theorists, seriously undervalues and, consequently, undertheorises states in the periphery—a point noted by John Saul: 'The problem of "the state" as it presents itself in the context of "underdevelopment" has been undertheorized and little researched.'³⁷ Yet, ironically, Alavi undertheorises these states, too, because he remains trapped within a Marxist perspective that regards the state as an instrument of the economy. His central proposition is that the state is not the instrument of one class; instead, it is the collective instrument of several.³⁸ But this is still to undervalue both the power and the interests of the state, for we have seen that states do not merely preserve the dominant mode of production, sometimes they use their power to create new ones. What Marxists have systematically failed to do is to take seriously state power and state interests. The whole class theoretical approach thus seems to be as inadequate as elite theory.

A theoretical synthesis: the State-Primacy approach

The elite theory approach of Huntington is clearly inadequate in failing to take into sufficient account the international exploitation of Third World countries. This is negated by the class theory approach of Frank and Wallerstein, which does emphasise international exploitation. However, this latter approach is also clearly inadequate in reducing the state to an instrument of capital. Yet both the elite and class theoretical approaches draw attention to important phenomena that must be recognised in any adequate theory. The task, clearly, is to retain what is of value in elite theory and class theory while discarding what is problematic. In other words, the task is to sublimate both approaches by, in a sense, containing and negating them. And such a sublation could be made possible by a 'negation of the negation': by a theoretical position that 'negates the negation' of the state, while including a class analysis that is able to highlight international exploitation.

The nature of the Third World state

If Third World states are as significant as they appear to be, how exactly are we to theorise them? The first thing to be kept in mind is that they are *post-colonial states*. They are located within countries that were formerly colonies of advanced states, themselves now Western liberal democracies, and it is those states which imposed state structures on their colonies. Why, then, have so many post-colonial states failed to develop the democratic institutions and practices modernisation theory expected? Christopher Clapham sheds light on this problem by usefully describing the Third World state as 'neo-patrimonial'.

Clapham draws on Max Weber's distinction between legal-rational, charismatic and traditional types of authority. Authority in the modern state is of the first kind. There is a distinction between public and private life whereby

one is supposed to be impartial while acting in the public sphere, but free to pursue one's own interests in the private sphere. The bureaucrat, when acting as a bureaucrat, is to disregard the fact that someone is his or her friend or relative and treat everyone alike. While acting in an impartial manner within this legal-rational institution, the official possesses legal-rational authority. The modern state is based on this sort of legal-rational approach.

Charismatic authority—the second type—is based upon some personal characteristic (usually messianic) of a rising leader, who usually wishes to change the social order in some way. However, when a successful charismatic leader comes to power, the society will tend to institutionalise the new authority structure, and so charismatic authority will often turn into the legal-rational kind.

The third variety of authority is traditional authority, and this usually takes a patrimonial form. Authority resides in a particular person, such as the village head or chief, rather than in an office. And as the word 'patrimonialism' implies, the relationship between the leader and the rest is like that of a father to his children. Unlike the case of the charismatic leader, the person who has traditional authority possesses it because of the prevailing social and political order, which he or she does not challenge. Authority is based on tradition—for example, by being the child of the previous ruler when tradition requires that succession follow on that basis. Most importantly, the authority structure is one where those with authority lower down the chain have it by virtue of a grant from those above.³⁹ And this differs from the legal-rational form where one has authority by virtue of one's position in a legal-rational institution. In a patrimonial system, anyone lower down the chain has authority because it has been given, ultimately, by the ruler.

Clapham argues that if one is to understand Third World states, patrimonial authority is the key. But such states are not simply patrimonial, rather they are '*neo-patrimonial*'. This is:

a form of organisation in which relationships of a broadly patrimonial type pervade a political and administrative system which is formally constructed on rational-legal lines. Officials hold positions in bureaucratic organisations with powers which are formally defined, but exercise those powers, so far as they can, as a form not of public service but of private property.⁴⁰

Thus neo-patrimonialism means that corruption is rife in post-colonial states. Officials see their positions as a source of wealth and use them accordingly. As they regard themselves as owning their positions, they think they can do what they like with them, so long as it does not offend whomever has given them their positions. And as positions are bestowed, nepotism is also rife.

What this suggests is that modernisation theory is perhaps right in drawing attention to a duality between a traditional sector and a modern sector which has been introduced by colonial powers. But modernisation theory is only partly right, because the colonial legacy is not one of the modern sector having modernised the rest of society; it is more one of traditional norms and behaviour having crept into a system that is supposed to be legal-rational. And although the old traditional norms might have worked well enough formerly, their amalgamation with a modern political structure has led to a disastrous political

system characterised by extensive corruption. Whereas modernisation theory assumed that the modern sector would dominate and replace the traditional one, instead the traditional sector has profoundly influenced the nature of the post-colonial state.

The colonial state was, of course, set up to maximise the extraction of wealth from the colony. Hence the possession of an official position in the post-colonial state allows the extraction of considerable resources from its people. And a state which is geared to maximise the extraction of wealth from its people is obviously going to be a coercive and an extremely powerful one. But it is only powerful in one sense. In another sense it is extremely fragile. Because controlling the state is a great source of wealth, it is a very attractive prize for any potential usurper. Therefore coups are common in Third World countries; and the Third World state, while being highly coercive, is simultaneously highly instable. As Marilyn Waring calculates: 'By 1985, 57 out of 114 independent developing states were militarily controlled. There had been 138 successful coups between 1960 and 1985.'⁴¹ One thing is clear: a state whose officials regard themselves as owning their positions and who view them as a means of enrichment, and which is such an attractive prize to individuals that it is subject to periodic coups, cannot simply be reduced to an instrument of any class in civil society.

If an instrumentalist theory of the state will not do, how are we to theorise the state? Recall that states occasionally back new modes of production, although they usually preserve the existing one. The simplest answer as to why states sometimes introduce a new mode of production and sometimes stabilise the prevalent one which benefits existing dominant classes or class amalgams is that in each particular case *the course of action taken is in the interests of the state*.

The precise reason why the preservation of the prevailing economic order is often in the interests of the state is that the state obtains its revenue from a functioning economy. And by obtaining revenue it is in a position to develop its coercive capacity. As Samuel Finer notes:

Military forces call for men, materials, and, once monetization has set in, for money, too. To extract these has often been very difficult. It has become easier and more generally acceptable as the centuries have rolled on ... Troops extract the taxes or the forage or the carts, and this contribution keeps them in being. More troops—more extraction—more troops: so a cycle of this kind could go on widening and deepening.⁴²

The state can then employ its developing coercive capacity to preserve the existing economic structure. On the other hand, the state can employ it to transform the economic structure. But why, exactly, would a state precipitate such a transformation? And when would it do so?

This is precisely what the State-Primacy Theory explains. It is a general theory of revolution⁴³ which identifies the state as having explanatory primacy with respect to the determination of a mode of production. According to this theory, the state tends to select relations of production that develop the productive forces, for that is usually in its interests. If the prevailing mode of production offers adequate revenue to the state, then the state has an interest in

preserving it. The reason why a state will introduce a new mode of production is because that new mode is perceived to be more productive than the old and presents the possibility of offering a greater revenue to the state. If and when the prevailing mode of production does not offer adequate revenue to the state and an alternative would be practicable, then the state has an interest in promoting a new mode of production. And when states find themselves in military competition with other states, as they usually do, they are driven to obtain as much revenue as possible in order to fund the massive costs of remaining militarily competitive.⁴⁴ That might mean, in certain circumstances, that they have no choice but to transform the prevailing economic relations to ones that are more productive.

In short, states ordinarily preserve relations of production that are in their interests. But when new economic relations are perceived to be more in their interests, then states rationally select those new relations. And this is compatible with Huntington's account of breakthrough coups, where a modernising military promotes the development of capitalist relations. Moreover, as states in military competition with other states would not have an interest in reverting to less productive economic relations, the State-Primacy Theory is also compatible with Huntington's account of veto coups, where the military prevents political developments that would put a brake on industrialisation. The State-Primacy Theory is thus consistent with what is of value in Huntington's account. But, as we have seen, Huntington leaves out international exploitation. How, then, can a State-Primacy approach deal with this question? It must be able to do so if it is to be a genuine sublation of elite theory and class theory.

State-Primacy and underdevelopment

Can the State-Primacy Theory provide an account of underdevelopment? To begin with, the theory prioritises the perceived interests of state actors. Interestingly, Robert Bates holds a position that, at first glance, seems to resemble the State-Primacy Theory:

Instead of simply reflecting the dominant mode of production, [the state] can also seek to transform it. In addition, rather than securing the fullest realisation of the productive potentialities at society's command, the state can in fact both fetter and undermine them. The African case ... compels recognition of the possibility that political forces may be fully autonomous and, as a consequence, may act at the cost of economic rationality and solely in service of themselves.⁴⁵

In what way, then, do state actors sacrifice economic rationality? Cash crops play a major role in many Third World countries. In Africa, where Bates conducted his research, the majority of governments 'maintain publicly sanctioned monopsonies for the purchase and marketing of these crops'.⁴⁶ Rural producers have little choice but to sell their produce to them at a domestic price set below the international one. Bates regards the difference between these prices as tantamount to taxing agricultural producers. Significantly, 'the marketing agencies have become the source of over a third of the revenues of some of the states of Africa'.⁴⁷

In addition, African governments, like those in many poor countries, frequently overvalue their currencies, and this is also tantamount to taxing rural producers:

By overvaluing their currencies, governments in Africa seek to make it easier for industries to import capital equipment; they thereby attempt to promote domestic industrialization. But in so doing they also lessen the purchasing power of those who earn their incomes in foreign markets. For, with the overvaluing of their currency, earnings of foreign exchange convert into lesser amounts of local 'dollars'. The maintenance of an overvalued currency thus represents a tax on exports; export agriculture is hurt in an effort to assist the growth of the industrial sector.⁴⁸

Now, this could be explained by the more powerfully expressed interests of the urban classes—whom states in LDCs have an interest in placating in order to avoid riots. Consequently, it is usual for such states to keep the price of food low. But, as Bates insists, the behaviour of African states is explained neither by the interests of the urban classes nor by an attempt to reconcile the interests of all groups within society. In other words, neither Marxist-type class theory nor pluralist theories can account for many of the policies adopted by states in LDCs, for example the toleration of inefficient projects, subsidising farm inputs as opposed to alternative means of keeping down food prices, a preference for rationing and, in general, discriminatory treatment within the sector of rural production.

However, the policies of African governments are quite understandable when the interests of state actors are taken into account. Consider inefficient projects:

If a project fails to generate an adequate return on the public investment, but is privately rewarding for those who build it, provision it, staff it, or hold tenancies in it, the political officials may none the less support it. For it will serve as a source of rewards for their followers and as an instrument for building a rural political constituency.⁴⁹

Similarly, part of the revenue obtained from marketing agencies can subsidise inputs for certain rural producers, just as a system of rationing allows government officials to allocate resources or permits to a selected few. In this way, not only can state actors purchase loyalty, but the opposition groups are weakened through division. Hence such policies 'enable governments to organize political support' and 'to disorganize political opposition'.⁵⁰ In short, agricultural policies are 'part of a repertoire of devices employed by African governments to secure political control over their populations and thus to remain in power'.⁵¹ Such policies are often economically inefficient and, 'in many cases, the inefficiencies persist *because* they are politically useful; economic inefficiencies afford governments means of retaining political power'.⁵²

All of this is compatible with the State-Primacy Theory. But it is more a theory of *undevelopment* rather than of *underdevelopment*. If one views Third World state actors as simply parasitical on their nation's economy; or as so preoccupied with retaining or extending their support within the country in order to hold onto power that they will preserve economic relations or pursue policies that benefit their supporters while fettering development, then one is

simply presenting an account of a lack of development because of internal failings. Although this would explain stagnation in certain countries, it is less consistent with a focus on international exploitation and fails to explain why states should transform modes of production. So, while Bates' account is, no doubt, part of the story, it is, at best, only a part.

Clearly, the key to understanding the behaviour of Third World states lies in attending to the problem they face in obtaining sufficient revenue. Much of the economies of LDCs comprises subsistence production, and much of the exchange that takes place does so in the informal sector. Unlike the formal economy that transnational corporations operate in, a large part of the economies of Third World countries offers a limited source of revenue to their states. Can this fact be used in an extended analysis to explain not only cases of underdevelopment but of underdevelopment or dependent development, too?

TNCs provide 'metropolitan states' with revenue—revenue such states would obviously seek to protect. If a Third World state were to receive military aid from a 'metropolitan state' for preserving economic relations that the latter benefited from—in other words, if a 'satellite' were to be offered military assistance for allowing TNCs to do virtually what they liked within its territory—then it is rational for the 'satellite state' to accede, as it would enable it to bypass the normal difficulties of obtaining sufficient revenue to meet its military requirements (see Fig. 1). In such a situation, the underdevelopment of its economy would not be a major concern for the 'satellite state'. This is precisely why states cannot be viewed in isolation—and viewing them in isolation is one of the weaknesses of Huntington's approach.

But what of those states that do not receive military aid from 'core states'? Well, surprising as it might at first seem, even in these cases it is frequently rational for 'peripheral states' to stabilise economic relations that lead to the exploitation of their own nationals by TNCs. States choose to stabilise economic relations that benefit one class rather than another because by so doing states maximise their income. For example, stabilising capitalist relations both underpins the exploitation of one class by another and promotes the high productivity that states usually require. However, given the extent of both subsistence production and the informal economy within the Third World, the most effective way for 'peripheral states' to obtain revenue is usually by imposing tariffs. As Michael Todaro points out: 'Duties on trade are the major source of government revenue in most LDCs, since they are a relatively easy form of taxation to impose and even easier to collect.'⁵³ Consequently, Third World states often have an interest in maintaining international trade, even when it leads to the underdevelopment of their economies, because such trade does at least allow those states to finance themselves.

There is another advantage to 'peripheral states' of cooperating with TNCs. As the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) notes: 'defence expenditure is one of the most import-intensive of activities, usually creating a large secondary demand for imported spares, ammunition, servicing, training, and fuel'.⁵⁴ What is more, such advanced military equipment necessitates a vast technological infrastructure. Hence much of the 'development' in Third World countries is geared to providing the background requirements of the

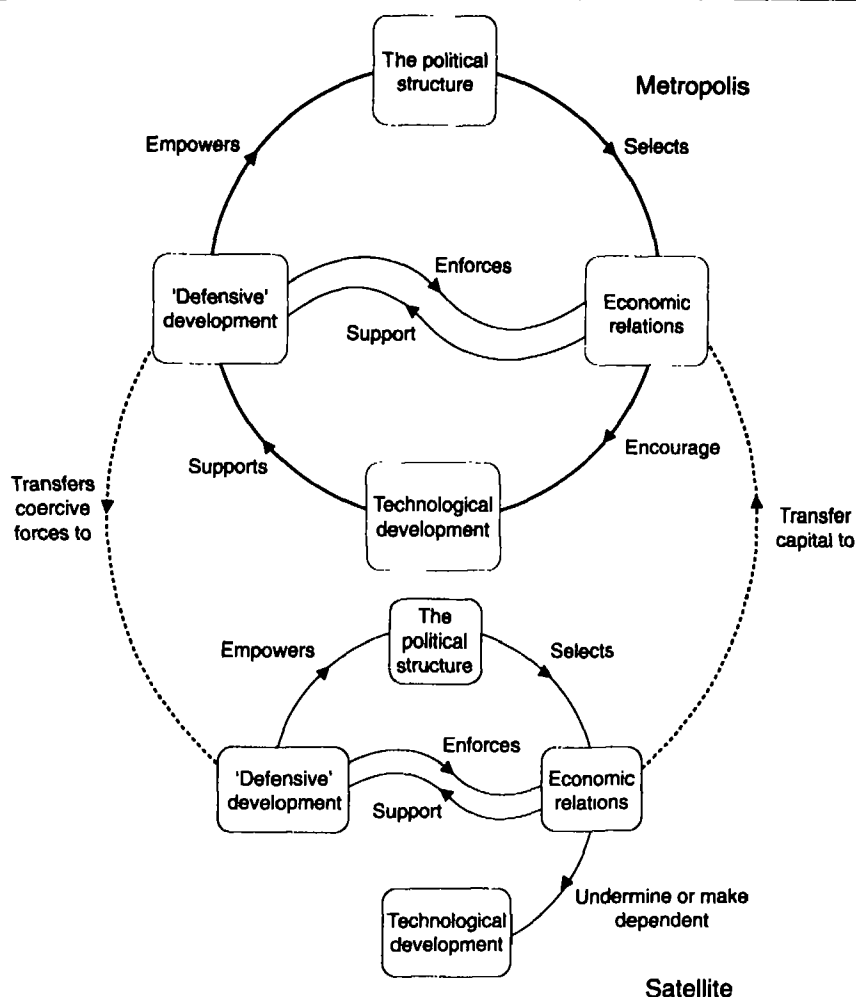


FIG. 1. Metropolis-satellite relations.

military, rather than meeting the needs of the people. All of this requires advanced technology—a precondition of Third World states maintaining their military competitiveness—and the prospect of more advanced technology is just what TNCs.

Of course, this prioritisation of military requirements,⁵⁵ with the accompanying profligate expenditure on armaments, not only causes human suffering, but terrible environmental damage in order to cash in on the natural resources needed to pay for it. In addition, arms build-ups often lead to wars. 'Yet', as Tim O'Riordan observes, 'despite the profound human suffering and ecological

devastation that are caused even by relatively small-scale wars, most nations persist in maintaining a credible military posture'.⁵⁶

Inevitably, such a 'credible military posture' will pose a threat to neighbouring states. The result is a treadmill of exorbitant military costs and a complicity devouring the local economy in order to pay them, for

when a nation's security is actually threatened, there is no real limit to the diversion of resources to ensure survival. The Middle Eastern countries (such as Israel and Jordan) currently invest about three-fifths of their national budgets (some 25% of total national wealth) in military expenditures even though this leads to inflation and economic depression.⁵⁷

Consequently, with such a proportionately astronomical demand for resources to satisfy their military preoccupations, if Third World states can obtain substantial revenue or new technology as a result of the activities of TNCs, or if they obtain military assistance from 'metropolitan states' that benefit from them, it is rational for such 'satellite states' to support these activities. Thus, *Third World states frequently have an interest in being complicit in the underdevelopment of their nation's economy*. This only becomes apparent when one realises that what is in the interests of Third World states is not necessarily what is in the interests of Third World peoples. Instead, it is often, though not always, what is in the interests of TNCs. In short, the interests of Third World states and those of transnationals often contingently correspond.⁵⁸

However, if a Third World state is complicit in the underdevelopment of its own country's economy because of the income it expects to be able to derive from trade, and should the potential revenue fail to be realised because the state is engaged in practices such as transfer pricing, then it would not be surprising were such a state occasionally to object—sometimes to the point of threatening to nationalise TNCs' assets. Sense can only be made both of the complicity of Third World states in the underdevelopment of their nations' economies by TNCs and of their occasional hostility to transnationals by taking seriously Third World states as autonomous agents rationally pursuing their own interests.

It is also worth noting that most TNCs ultimately derive their power from 'core states' who, in benefiting from their activities abroad, provide them with protection, both defensively and aggressively.⁵⁹ And when a 'core state' supplies domestic capital, that does not entail that it does so because it is the instrument of such capital; for it is in the interests of states to protect the capital they obtain revenue from.⁶⁰ In the opinion of Stephen Krasner: states are 'the basic actors in the international system. The behaviour of other actors, including multinational corporations and international organizations, is conditioned and delimited by state decisions and state power'.⁶¹

So, as both 'core states' and 'peripheral states' obtain revenue from their activity, the underdevelopment of Third World economies can thus be in the interests of both. And correlative to this underdevelopment is the more rapid development of the economies of the 'core states'. Hence there is global technological development but it is aggregative, not universal. Certainly, the 'peripheral state' is thereby losing out in competition with the 'core state' which benefits most from capital extraction. But this is rational for the 'periph-

state', for in managing to obtain revenue, it benefits *vis-à-vis* its immediate military competitors—namely, neighbouring 'peripheral states'. Furthermore, the revenue it obtains also allows it to retain control over its own nationals, which is one of its primary concerns.

I have argued that it is rational for a weak state lacking its own significant formal economy and relying on the export of cash crops or raw materials to be complicit in the underdevelopment of its own country's economy. But it is also rational for a weak state to support transnational-financed industrial development, even if the development is 'dependent' or skewed, because such development makes more advanced technology available and could provide a basis for later, wider-scale industrialisation that holds out the promise of greater revenue. Consequently, the State-Primacy Theory can accommodate not only some of the insights of underdevelopment theory, but of dependency theory as well. But even more important, a stronger Third World state has an interest in developing its own industry within its own 'modern' formal economy when it is in a position to do so, for that would offer it the greatest revenue.⁶²

Consider the NICs Taiwan and South Korea. As James Manor observes: 'The Taiwan government has long possessed formidable coercive powers, but in recent times it has demonstrated a capacity to assist the private sector in achieving spectacular export success.'⁶³ Moreover, the 'tradition of centralized government control over the private sector' in South Korea is 'pervasive',⁶⁴ while the same was true of Japan.⁶⁵ In other words, the State-Primacy Theory can also account for the rise of the NICs, whereas underdevelopment theory is clearly inadequate in so far as it 'neither anticipated nor explained the rise of newly industrializing countries on the "periphery" of the international economic system'.⁶⁶

Four problem areas

Clearly, the State-Primacy Theory has greater explanatory power than the alternative theories. But surely, it will be objected, there are obvious cases that it would have difficulty in explaining. Let me therefore consider four highly contrasting, apparent counter-examples to the appropriateness of applying the State-Primacy Theory to the Third World: Islamic fundamentalism, revolutionary Third World states, 'quasi-states', and global neoliberalism. Lack of space means that the following remarks will of necessity be cursory; however, they do indicate how the State-Primacy Theory could plausibly respond to such ostensible difficulties.

Fundamentalist Islamic states. From the end of the 1970s several Third World states have espoused and promoted Islamic fundamentalism. Often this has seemed to go hand in hand with a rejection of capitalist values and the undermining of capitalist economic relations. This would suggest economic regression. Yet the State-Primacy Theory would lead one to expect states to seek economic progress when practicable. Doesn't this pose a problem for the theory?

It certainly appears to be a difficulty, but the State-Primacy Theory

can deal with it. We have already seen that state interests can explain undevelopment. But fundamentalist Islamic states are a special case. Most are oil exporters, and their oil industries are, by and large, state controlled. This means that such states can obtain considerable revenue directly. As a consequence, they do not have the need that most states have for a highly productive capitalist economy. In which case, they can promote forms of social control requiring values that do not appear homologous with capitalism. If social control can be better managed by propagating anti-capitalist values, then it is in the interest of oil-rich states to propagate them at the expense of redundant capitalist relations.

Moreover, oil-rich states possess sufficient economic strength for them to be neither 'satellites' nor 'dependent states'. Hence, they can afford to be far more explicit in their opposition to imperialism than weaker states who are dependent upon the activities of transnationals or 'metropolitan' military aid. An oil-rich state has the luxury of being free not only to denounce the West and all its values, but also to employ the anti-imperialist opposition that is thereby generated to enhance its position with respect to its own people and render its internal control more secure. For a state in such a situation, the promotion of Islamic fundamentalism is quite rational. This is not to deny that the leaders of such states are sincere in their religious beliefs. It is only to point out that promoting such beliefs does not actually conflict with their interests.

Revolutionary states in the Third World. What, though, of a country like China during the Cultural Revolution or, to take a more lurid example, Kampuchea under the Khmer Rouge? In their purging of intellectuals, such countries appear highly regressive with respect to development, yet they were certainly not oil-rich.

Let me first consider China. Mao came to power at the head of a peasant-based guerrilla army. The initial strategy adopted by the Chinese Communist Party on gaining control of mainland China in 1949 was to follow the Soviet model of development. However, with even less centralised industry than in the early Soviet Union, China switched to a course of small-scale, rural industrialisation, which reached its peak in the Great Leap Forward, launched in 1958. However, with the failure of the Great Leap Forward, Mao lost face in the Party. The Cultural Revolution of the 1960s is best seen as a temporary return by Mao to his power base—the peasantry and the Red Army—in response to a power struggle in which he was embroiled within the Party.

Can the State-Primacy Theory deal with Kampuchea, though? In particular, can it deal with the de-urbanisation strategy of the Khmer Rouge, which led to de-industrialisation in the short-term? Well, Pol Pot has been regarded as a Maoist who believed that he was moving directly to a cultural revolution of his own. This could be viewed as an irrational, blind adherence to a certain interpretation of Maoism or it could be seen as the most rational strategy for a leader of a peasant guerrilla army. However, the price of Kampuchea's de-industrialisation was its inability to maintain its defensive capability. Consequently, it could not defend itself adequately against a Vietnamese invasion in response to the threat the Khmer Rouge posed to all neighbouring countries. The relations

that ultimately prevailed in Cambodia were those imposed by Vietnam in its own interests and which currently support the (now independent) Cambodian state—a state which continues to be harassed by the Khmer Rouge.

This explanation of the economic relations that came to prevail in Cambodia employs a Darwinian feature of the State-Primacy Theory: Countries controlled by political agents that (perhaps irrationally) select economic structures which fail to support their defence requirements will tend to be defeated by those that have chosen more appropriate economic structures. And the latter will impose on the former economic relations more suited to serving the (imperialist) state's interests. Hence by a Darwinian mechanism, the economic relations that ultimately prevail will be those suited to serving a state's interests—which is precisely what the State-Primacy Theory claims.

So the State-Primacy Theory can, in fact, deal with even the most problematic of Third World revolutionary states. What is worth stressing, though, is the problem revolutionary states in general pose for Marxist theorists. Consider Gordon White:

the pre- (and post-) revolutionary context of military threat and conflict ... contributes to a pervasive militarisation of society, ideologically and institutionally, a heavy security consciousness which tends to retain its strength when the actual level of threat has [receded]. The heavily statist nature of Third World socialist societies both reflects and reinforces these tendencies, a fact which helps to explain the weakness of "socialist internationalism" and the frequency of wars *between* socialist countries over the past decade.⁶⁷

While struggling to explain the undesirable behaviour of 'Marxist' regimes in the Third World, some Marxists thus offer explanations that seem far more compatible with the State-Primacy Theory than with the primacy Marxism accords to economics.

'Quasi-states'. However, given that the State-Primacy Theory emphasises state interests, how can it explain the creation and persistence of post-colonial states that seem barely capable of defending themselves internationally? Robert Jackson has dubbed such states 'quasi-states', and views them more as supported 'by international law and material aid' than as 'self-standing structures with domestic foundations'.⁶⁸ How could such weak states have escaped colonial control and remained sovereign entities?

De-colonisation did not reach its peak until after the Second World War. The United States entered the war after the great European powers had begun to exhaust themselves in mutual conflict. Thus it emerged from the war as the world's strongest military and economic power. In order to become the 'hegemon'⁶⁹ of the 'free world', the USA had an interest in the decline of British and French imperialism—perhaps most palpably revealed in its response to the Suez invasion. Given that the European powers had created in their colonies the foundations for independent capitalist countries, given that US economic power could be employed to exploit such independent countries without the need for direct military control, and given that the direct military takeover of the former European colonies would have been impracticable and needlessly costly, US interests were best served by supporting an international system of sovereign

states. While the USA was at its economic peak and could effectively exploit independent nations, it had a clear interest in leading a 'free world' in which the sovereignty of states (that might otherwise succumb to Soviet imperialism) would be guaranteed by 'the international community'. Of course, the sovereignty of states that appeared to threaten US interests, such as Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada or Kampuchea, failed to attain an equal measure of recognition. In short, the emergence and persistence of so-called 'quasi-states' can be explained by reference to the interests of the world's most powerful state.

In addition, many states desire to expand their military capabilities not because they intend to invade their neighbours, but because they fear that their neighbours have imperialist designs on them. Clearly, it is rational for such weak states to support an international regime that purports to recognise and preserve each state's 'right' to sovereignty.

Globalisation. But surely, it will be objected, doesn't global neoliberalism, so-called, indicate that it is correct to accord economics explanatory primacy? In response recent claims about globalisation are not, in fact, incompatible with the State-Primacy Theory. According to Leo Panitch:

capitalist globalisation is a process which ... takes place in, through, and under the aegis of states; it is encoded by them and in important respects even authored by them; and it involves a shift in power relations within states that often means the centralisation and concentration of state powers as the necessary condition of and accompaniment to global market discipline.⁷⁰

In short, any 'international constitutionalisation of neo-liberalism has taken place through the agency of states'.⁷¹ It would not be difficult, therefore, in defence of the State-Primacy Theory, to argue that any such development is in the interests of those states responsible for it.

Conclusion

The State-Primacy Theory can explain political and economic developments in the Third World. Unlike other theories, it manages to cast light on the relationship between the interests of Third World states and the development, dependent development, underdevelopment or underdevelopment of their economies, rather than obscure it. Third World states are neither the instruments of international capital nor of an indigenous bourgeoisie, but are rational actors who will industrialise their economies when practicable, but who often find it in their interests to be accomplices in the dependent development or even underdevelopment of their own economies. And the reason primarily has to do with the difficulties such states experience in obtaining sufficient revenue. Furthermore, it is by focusing on the independent interests of Third World states that the State-Primacy Theory is able to explain why it is that they sometimes threaten to take punitive action against TNCs, an action inconsistent with neo-Marxist underdevelopment theory.

Clearly it is necessary to negate the Marxist view, which undertheorises the state. But the State-Primacy Theory not only emphasises the role of the state, it

simultaneously highlights the exploitative nature of Third World societies and the frequent underdevelopment or dependent development of their economies. And this underdevelopment or dependent development not only has disastrous human consequences, but also environmental ones. Yet these features of the Third World are underplayed and undertheorised both by modernisation theory and by Huntington's approach—which is why they, too, have to be negated. In short, the State-Primacy Theory solves the intractable problems in Wallerstein and Frank, on the one hand, and in Huntington, on the other, by transcending their theoretical positions. It effectively combines the valuable insights that can be gleaned from Huntington's more state-centred analysis with those from underdevelopment and dependency theory, while leaving behind the flaws characteristic of these approaches.

But the State-Primacy Theory doesn't just stop there. Both modernisation theory and underdevelopment theory, although in very different ways, place their faith in the Third World state. The State-Primacy Theory, however, indicates that it would be a grave mistake to place much faith in the nation-state as the solution to Third World problems. What the theory reveals is that *both 'core states' and 'peripheral states' bear responsibility for the oppression and exploitation of the world's poor and the environmental degradation that accompanies this.* For example, bilateral aid primarily serves to prop up regimes that are complicit in the exploitation of their people and the destruction of their environment. Support for the oppressed people of the world is, therefore, not the same as wanting a better deal for the disadvantaged states that oppress them. We must rely neither on rich states nor on poor ones for genuine liberation. Rather, it is to the peoples of this world (not their states) and to the nongovernmental organisations which help them to help themselves that we must look for a future that is non-exploitative of people and the planet.

Notes

I am indebted to Laura Summers for a number of invaluable comments on an earlier draft of this article.

¹ G A Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978.

² See Alan Carter, *Marx: A Radical Critique*, Brighton: Wheatsheaf Books, 1988, section 6.3; also see Alan Carter, 'Functional explanation and the state', in Paul Wetherly (ed), *Marx's Theory of History: The Contemporary Debate*, Aldershot: Avebury, 1992. This theoretical approach has been employed to construct an environmentalist political philosophy in Alan Carter, 'Towards a green political theory', in Andrew Dobson & Paul Lucardie (eds), *The Politics of Nature: Explorations in Green Political Theory*, London: Routledge, 1993.

³ For example, Colin Leys informs us that 'A survey of US professors in 1974 found that *Political Order* was the book most often cited as among the "most important in the field"'. Colin Leys, 'Samuel Huntington and the end of classical modernization theory', in H Alavi and T Shanin (eds), *Introduction to the Sociology of 'Developing Societies'*, London: Macmillan, 1982, p 349 n.

⁴ As James Manor notes, 'political development' and 'dependency', which are 'the two paradigms or schools of thought that have dominated the study of Third World politics over the last quarter-century[,] have encountered serious difficulties'. James Manor, 'Politics and the neo-liberals', in Christopher Colclough & James Manor (eds), *States or Markets? Neo-liberalism and the Development Policy Debate*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991, p 306.

⁵ However, 'Some economists looked to the neo-liberal paradigm for the study of economic systems, which gained influence just as the "political development" and "dependency" schools were encountering difficulties

... But analysts of Third World politics have shown scarcely a flicker of interest in this body of ideas. This is partly because the neo-liberal economists, like the earlier and more optimistic generation of development economists against whom they are reacting, lack a theory of the state.' James Manor, 'Introduction', in Manor (ed.), *Rethinking Third World Politics*, London: Longman, 1991, pp 9–10 n. Yet the nature of state structures will determine the interests of state actors—for example, the structure of the Third World state explains the need to satisfy certain clients if state actors in the Third World are to remain in power.

⁶ Although the State-Primacy Theory, like 'realist' positions, accords primacy to the state, it goes beyond them in being a general theory of revolution in the Marxist sense—namely, from one mode of production to another (see note 43 below). For some clarifications, see Alan Carter, 'Fettering, development and revolution' (forthcoming).

⁷ See for example, Gabriel Almond, 'Introduction: a functional approach to comparative politics', in Gabriel Almond & James Coleman (eds), *The Politics of the Developing Areas*, Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960, p 53.

⁸ Samuel P Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968, p 4.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p 363.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p 266.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, p 196

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p 93.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp 7–8. The value he places on authority visibly strays into authoritarianism when he writes: 'Societies, such as Sparta, Rome, and Britain, which have been admired by their contemporaries for the authority and justice of their laws, have also been admired for the coherence and discipline of their armies. Discipline and development go hand in hand.' *Ibid.*, pp 23–24.

¹⁶ See *ibid.*, pp 145–146

¹⁷ As he writes: 'the more backward a society is, the more progressive the role of its military; the more advanced a society becomes, the more conservative and reactionary becomes the role of the military'. *Ibid.*, p 221.

¹⁸ See *ibid.*, p 245. And as he adds: 'The upshot of democracy is to disperse power among a plurality of more traditional elites. By increasing the power of rural groups democracy also tends to promote policies aimed at rural and agrarian rather than urban and industrial development.' *Ibid.* In which case, it is difficult to see why a modernising military would be committed to democracy.

¹⁹ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, New York: Academic Press, 1974, especially p 350.

²⁰ André Gunder Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America: Historical Studies of Chile and Brazil*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967, p xi.

²¹ André Gunder Frank, 'The development of underdevelopment', *Monthly Review*, 41(2), 1989, p 44.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*, pp 44–45

²⁴ The claim that Latin America has been capitalist since the 16th century has been the subject of much controversy. See especially, Ernesto Laclau, 'Feudalism and capitalism in Latin America', *New Left Review*, 67, May/June 1971. Much of the disagreement concerns the issue of whether exploitation is based solely in production or also in exchange. On this point see John Roemer, 'New directions in the Marxian theory of exploitation and class', in Roemer (ed.), *Analytical Marxism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986

²⁵ However, the view (see Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, pp 119–120) that super exploitation of the Third World will eventually drive its peoples to rebel seems rather optimistic. As Huntington points out: 'The simple poverty thesis falls down because people who are really poor are too poor for politics and too poor for protest. They are indifferent, apathetic, and lack exposure to the media and other stimuli which would arouse their aspirations in such manner as to galvanize them into political activity'. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, p 52. This implies that if underdevelopment is in fact taking place, the prospects for revolution might be even grimmer than they would be otherwise.

²⁶ See Bill Warren, 'Imperialism and capitalist industrialization', *New Left Review*, 81, September/October 1973. Also see Bill Warren, *Imperialism: Pioneer of Capitalism*, ed J Sender, London: New Left Books, 1980. For criticisms of Warren, see Arghiri Emmanuel, 'Myths of development versus myths of underdevelopment', and Philip McMichael, James Petras & Robert Rhodes, 'Imperialism and the contradictions of development', both in *New Left Review*, 85, May/June 1974. Many of Warren's conclusions depend upon misleading aggregations of data. Moreover, his prescription is one of unhindered capitalist expansion as a prelude to socialism. A more environmentally irresponsible strategy is hard to imagine.

²⁷ Fernando Henrique Cardoso, 'Dependency and development in Latin America', *New Left Review*, 74, July/August 1972, p 89.

- ²⁸ Ibid., p 94.
- ²⁹ Warren, 'Imperialism and capitalist industrialization', p 12.
- ³⁰ Ibid.
- ³¹ Stephen Krusner, *Structural Conflict: The Third World against Global Liberalism*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985, p 181.
- ³² Teodor Shanin, 'Class, state, and revolution: substitutes and realities', in Alavi & Shanin, *Introduction to the Sociology of 'Developing Societies'*, p 316. Even a leading dependency theorist notes that, 'Paradoxically, the military have taken upon themselves the task of modernization'. T Dos Santos, 'The crisis of development theory and the problem of dependence in Latin America', in Henry Bernstein (ed), *Underdevelopment and Development: The Third World Today*, London: Penguin, 1976, p 70. In addition, Ralph Miliband, a major Marxist theorist of the state, when discussing post-colonial countries, admits that 'the relation between economic and political power has been inverted'. See Ralph Miliband, *Marxism and Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977, pp 108-109. In other words, the moment one examines the Third World, it becomes clear that Marxist theory has everything upside down.
- ³³ Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, p 355.
- ³⁴ Ibid., p 134.
- ³⁵ See ibid., p 349.
- ³⁶ Hamza Alavi, 'The state in post-colonial societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh', in Harry Goulbourne (ed), *Politics and State in the Third World*, London: Macmillan, 1979, pp 40-41.
- ³⁷ John S Saul, 'The state in post-colonial societies: Tanzania', in Ralph Miliband & John Saville (eds), *The Socialist Register 1974*, London: Merlin, 1974, p 349.
- ³⁸ See Alavi, 'The state in post-colonial societies', pp 41-42.
- ³⁹ See Christopher Clapham, *Third World Politics*, London: Croom Helm, 1985, p 48.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴¹ Marilyn Waring, *If Women Counted: A New Feminist Economics*, London: Macmillan, 1989, p 171.
- ⁴² Samuel E Finer, 'State- and nation-building in Europe: the role of the military', in Charles Tilly (ed), *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975, p 96. This point is also acknowledged in Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, p 356.
- ⁴³ In this respect, the State-Primacy approach is a theoretical advance on Huntington, for as Leys points out, Marx's conception of revolution refers to a transition 'from an epoch dominated by one mode of production (such as feudalism or capitalism) to a new epoch dominated by a new mode of production. For Huntington, however, "revolution" refers ... simply to any "rapid, fundamental, and violent change".' Leys, 'Samuel Huntington and the end of classical modernization theory', p 346. Unlike Huntington's far less specific approach, the State Primacy Theory is a theory of revolution in this sense.
- ⁴⁴ Sadly: 'Since the early 1960s, military spending in developing countries as a whole has increased fivefold.' G H Brundtland et al, *Our Common Future*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987, p 298.
- ⁴⁵ Robert H Bates, *Essays on the Political Economy of Rural Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, p 147.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid., p 109.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid., p 110.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid., pp 110-111.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., p 127.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid.
- ⁵¹ Ibid., p 125.
- ⁵² Ibid., p 128.
- ⁵³ Michael P Todaro, *Economic Development in the Third World*, New York: Longman, 1985, p 414.
- ⁵⁴ Brundtland et al, *Our Common Future*, p 299.
- ⁵⁵ In the words of the Brandt Report: 'It is a terrible irony that the most dynamic and rapid transfer of highly sophisticated equipment and technology from rich to poor countries has been in the machinery of death.' Willy Brandt et al, *North-South: A Programme for Survival*, London: Pan, 1980, p 14.
- ⁵⁶ Tim O'Riordan, *Environmentalism*, London: Pion, 1981, p 22.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid. Remarkably, 'Global military spending in 1985 was well in excess of \$900 billion. This was more than the total income of the poorest half of humanity.' Brundtland et al, *Our Common Future*, p 297.
- ⁵⁸ As Michael Redclift observes: 'Criticism tends to overlook the essentially rational and systematic way in which TNCs operate, usually with the support or complicity of national governments in less developed countries' (emphasis added). Michael Redclift, *Sustainable Development: Exploring the Contradictions*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987, p 73. 'Indeed,' Redclift continues, 'the state is frequently the guarantor of TNCs, not only by providing a legal basis for their operation, but by underwriting them financially.' Ibid.
- ⁵⁹ See Robin Murray, 'The internationalization of capital and the nation state', *New Left Review*, 67, May/June 1971, pp 91-92.
- ⁶⁰ However, advanced states do not act as they do with respect to the Third World simply in order to benefit

their own capitalists. As the Brandt Report insists: 'The major powers sell weapons mainly to suit their own foreign policy or to maintain regional balances, rather than to benefit their economies.' Brandt *et al*, *North-South*, p 120.

⁶¹ Krusner, *Structural Conflict*, p 28.

⁶² This can be used to help explain international economic crises. States have an interest in developing their own 'strategic industries', which enable 'military self-sufficiency and national economic independence'. Gautam Sen, *The Military Origins of Industrialisation and International Trade Rivalry*, London: Frances Pinter, 1984, p 6. As Sen writes: 'Since the benefits of economies of scale, both static and dynamic, can be reaped by longer production runs the latecomer countries will ... need to establish a level of capacity, when they industrialise, that allows them to reach the competitive threshold already prevalent in the firstcomer countries, with the attendant need for adequate export markets as well. Thus, they in turn may establish a level of productive capacity in excess of local consumption levels and hope to carve out a share in the international market. A further element which accentuates the problems of excess capacity is the need to ensure the ability to produce adequate quantities during war-time. Thus, the planned capacity may well exceed strictly national peace-time needs.' Ibid, p 8. Such an account could be expanded to explain 'Kondratieff cycles', which Gilpin insists lack a convincing causal mechanism. See Robert Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987, pp 100-106. In the run-up to major wars, the productive capacity in each country's strategic industries would rise to a point where global overproduction ensued. If industry remained intact after the war, there would be a global surplus and a recession would follow until excess capacity was cut back. If, on the other hand, industry was severely damaged during the war, there would be space for growth. This might explain why high growth occurred after the second of the two World Wars, but a depression fell between them.

⁶³ Manor, 'Politics and the neo-liberals', p 309.

⁶⁴ John Toye, quoted in *ibid*.

⁶⁵ '[I]n the case of Japan, industrialisation was engendered by the State's efforts to create a domestic defence industry during the third quarter of the nineteenth century.' Sen, *The Military Origins of Industrialisation and International Trade Rivalry*, p 9. Interestingly, the state has also played a major role in the changes taking place in China: 'Economic liberalization in China has ... been attended by the shrinkage of certain party and state agencies and roles, but also by the very substantial growth of the state, both as an arena within which capitalism can operate and as an enabler of private enterprises.' Manor, 'Politics and the neo liberals', p 309.

⁶⁶ Manor, 'Introduction', in *Rethinking Third World Politics*, p 2.

⁶⁷ Gordon White, 'Revolutionary socialist development in the Third World: an overview', in Gordon White, Robin Murray & Christine White (eds), *Revolutionary Socialist Development in the Third World*, Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1983, p 6.

⁶⁸ Robert Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, p 5.

⁶⁹ See Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations*, pp 72-80 for a summary of the theory of hegemonic stability.

⁷⁰ Leo Panitch, 'Globalisation and the state', in Ralph Miliband & Leo Panitch, *Socialist Register 1994: Between Globalism and Nationalism*, London: Merlin Press, 1994, p 64.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p 87.

Review of African Political Economy

EDITORS

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Review of African Political Economy (ROAPE) is published quarterly by Carfax Publishing Company for the ROAPE international editorial collective. *ROAPE* is a fully refereed journal covering all aspects of African political economy. *ROAPE* has always involved the readership in shaping the journal's coverage, welcoming contributions from grass roots organisations, women's organisations, trade unions and political groups. The journal is unique in the comprehensiveness of its bibliographic referencing, information monitoring, statistical documentation and coverage of work-in-progress.

1995 - Volume 22 (4 issues). ISSN 0305-6244

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The overpoliticised state and international politics: Nicaragua, Haiti, Cambodia and Togo

S N SANGMPAM

In 1989, deploring the 'wide gulf separating the perspectives of comparativists and international relations scholars,' James Caporaso reminded them that 'this is not the time to go into the respective stereotypes each subcommunity has of the other'.¹ This article is an attempt to bridge the gulf between comparative politics and international politics. It deals with the failure of foreign powers to establish stability and democracy—the two auxiliary means to the pursuit of their national interests—in the Third World. Contrary to conventional explanations, it is argued that the failure results not from what foreign powers do or fail to do, but from the ability of third world states, regardless of their size and strength, to impose their structural will on foreign powers. As a result, foreign powers accommodate the overpoliticised behaviour of internal forces in the Third World, making them equally overpoliticised and, thus, subverting their twin objectives of stability and democracy. The essay postpones theoretical explanation and focuses on empirical evidence by demonstrating, contrary to the now prevailing tendency in comparative and international politics, the remarkable similarities among third world countries.

The problem

One of the dominant international political events between 1992 and early 1994 was the US and UN involvements in Somalia and Haiti to reestablish stability and democracy. In both cases, the missions failed to accomplish their objectives because of stiff resistance from internal forces in both countries. The resistance forced the USA and the UN either to withdraw from the countries (total withdrawal from Somalia took place in February 1995) or to reevaluate their missions by seeking compromise with the very forces that presumably threatened peace and democracy. One recalls, for instance, the US allocation of a plane to transport Somalia's General Aidid to the negotiating table in Ethiopia after failing to punish him for the deaths of Pakistani UN soldiers and after a bloody confrontation with his forces in which 18 US soldiers and other UN forces perished. One recalls also the USA and France contradictorily appeasing stands *vis-à-vis* Haiti's military from 1991 to 1994 after they had promised to reestablish democratic rule there. President Clinton's decisive support for the Aristide regime in September 1994 was opposed by many on the accurate grounds that the regime itself did not—despite Aristide's election—provide an environment conducive to democracy and that his return to power would not end the crisis.

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In each case, policy makers were warned against the loss of US and UN soldiers and were blamed for their ill-conceived policy, lack of resolve and contradictorily appeasing stand *vis-à-vis* antistability and antidemocratic forces.²

This pattern is not new. Historically, despite US, Western and UN commitment to stability and democracy in the Third World, more often than not their forces have withdrawn without achieving either one, but aligned themselves instead, and paradoxically, with forces opposed to or, at the very least, unable to deliver, stability and democracy. It may be true that no outside power can guarantee stability and democracy in a third world country and, on this score, the issue of stability and democracy may not be an important one. Nevertheless, the fact that foreign powers accommodate antistability and antidemocratic forces at all is of major significance. It raises a crucial question: how does one explain the failure of foreign powers to achieve their foreign policy objectives of stability and democracy and their contradictorily accommodating stands *vis-à-vis* third world forces opposed to their foreign policy objectives of stability and democracy even in 'weak', small and highly dependent third world countries that can be militarily or economically influenced?

Answers to this question are well known. Generally, explanations derived from realism, imperialism, world system/dependency, hegemony and 'weak states' models impute the contradictory accommodation, not to what the third world states are able to do, but to what foreign powers, including the international system itself, do or fail to do.³

This essay proposes an alternative argument. It contends that the contradictorily accommodating stand of foreign powers results not from what they do or fail to do but from the ability of overpoliticised third world states, regardless of their size, strength and level of dependence, to impose an accommodating posture on foreign actors as they pursue their interests. Such an argument requires theoretical and empirical evidence. However, for space reasons, I will postpone the theoretical explanation. Rather this article presents some factual evidence to establish first—in contradiction to the prevailing tendency in comparative and international politics to overemphasise 'differences' among third world countries—the remarkable empirical similarities in their brand of politics ('overpoliticisation') and ability to impose a contradictory accommodation to overpoliticisation on foreign powers. Because of space limitations, even the attempt to gather empirical evidence can only be limited and tentative.

The essay is based on the comparison of four overpoliticised states: Nicaragua,⁴ Haiti,⁵ Cambodia⁶ and Togo.⁷ Although they interact with multiple foreign actors, the focus is on their relations with the USA, France and minimally, the UN. The choice of the USA and France, on the one hand, and the four third world countries, on the other, does not imply 'favoured patron-client relations' nor does it assume that the USA and France have more interests in the four countries than elsewhere. The choice is based on the frequency of US and French involvements in the four third world countries. And four major reasons justify the choice of these states. First, they are representative of the major regions of the Third World. Second, they are equally divided into countries that became independent under the competitive international system of the 19th century (Haiti in 1804 and Nicaragua in 1838) and under the normative

international system of the post-World War II era (Cambodia in 1953 and Togo in 1960). This division prevents one from imputing the behaviour of foreign actors towards these countries to the constraints of the contemporary normative international system. Third, all four countries are small, poor and 'weak' states, which helps to better test my proposition that, regardless of their level of dependence and strength, third world overpoliticised states have the ability to impose an accommodating posture on foreign actors. Because the four cases are 'extreme cases' at one end of the spectrum, they eliminate the need for a counter-factual case, that is, a 'controlled experiment' with a bigger and relatively less dependent third world country. Fourth, all four countries have pursued a democratisation agenda in the 1990s, which allows comparisons between earlier patterns and the more contemporaneous ones and thus constitutes a good test for the thesis. For this reason, the treatment of time for each case is diachronic, spreading from their respective independence to 1995.

The overpoliticized state: a definition

The state is a set of relationships and interactions among social classes and groups that is maintained, organised and regulated by political power; as the nodal point of these relationships, political power implies the monopoly of the means of coercion and a set of specifically designed institutions over a given territory. The state is unthinkable without politics, the expression of competitive interests of individuals, groups or classes making up society. As competition, politics aims to distribute the social product (goods and services) by controlling or influencing political power. It structures the state because the state is that relationship formed by competing social actors.⁸ Both politics and the state are, in turn, unexplainable outside society and its ways of generating the social product. Elsewhere, I have argued that the state in the Third World is an 'overpoliticised state' because of the way politics as competition over the social product is played.⁹ The overpoliticised state, an outcome of pseudocapitalism that exists in the Third World and differs from capitalism in Western societies, is characterised by the following: (1) power holders use overt compulsion to organise political representation, participation and competition over the social product; (2) state power is fluid, and constant insecurity characterises holders of state power in their relations to other social actors; (3) political participation and competition over the social product take place outside established institutions; (4) there is general use of open violence and confrontation in the competition, often expressed in the form of tribal, regional, religious or class conflicts; (5) there is a lack of compromise over the outcome of the competition, which explains the higher intensity and lower resolution of its crises; and (6) depending on the historical context, these five features take the form of either a pure or semi-authoritarian/dictatorial regime or an electoralist regime¹⁰ that maintains a 'democratic' facade through elections, however regular, while sharing these features with authoritarian regimes. For this reason, in this essay third world states generally referred to as 'democracies' are viewed as almost identical twins of authoritarian regimes, both of which are 'genetically' linked to the overpoliticised state.

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As a concept, the overpoliticised state has the ambition of being an inclusive one that covers all third world regimes. In this sense, the overpoliticised state is to third world countries what the capitalist democratic state is to Western countries. This claim does not dismiss variations. Indeed, the notion of the 'liberal (capitalist) democratic state' applied to all Western countries does not negate the fact that Italy's democracy is more unstable than most other Western democracies and that the field of political competition has generally been more open in European democracies, where extreme and communist political parties are allowed to compete, than in the USA, where the field is more circumscribed by a two-party system. Central to the notion of the capitalist democratic state are the crucial similarities shared by Italy, the USA, and all other Western countries. The same holds true for third world countries. The concept of the overpoliticised state does not dismiss their variations but underscores their fundamental similarities. All share overpoliticisation, as described by the above six features, and differ, on this score, from liberal democratic states of the West. Despite this important remark, the ambition of the concept is tempered by the requirements of any research; in the previously cited 1992 article, I left open the possibility of a third world state deviating from the model and suggested that empirical research be undertaken to this end. This article extends such an empirical test, which has already begun with a major case study,¹¹ to international politics. To underscore the traits of overpoliticisation, I shall, throughout the text, use the adjective 'overpoliticised' to refer to events, situations or actions in the four third world countries.

Before showing how the overpoliticised state thus defined imposes an accommodating posture on the USA, France and the UN, its remarkably similar empirical manifestations in the four third world countries need to be analysed.

Patterns of overpoliticisation, 1800s–1990s

As soon as it became independent in 1838, Nicaragua became engulfed in open political confrontations pitting the economic elite against the peasants and the agrarian elite of Granada (the 'conservatives') against the commercial elite of Leon (the 'liberals'). These confrontations flared up at times as civil wars and occupied much of the country's history up to the advent of the Somoza dynasty in the 1930s. The first major confrontation was the overthrow of the conservative government by the liberals, aided by the US journalist-mercenary William Walker in 1855. In the ensuing years, in addition to the war against Walker, who proclaimed himself President of Nicaragua, there was the bloody War of the Comuneros in 1881, opposing the peasants to the Pedro Chamorro conservative government, which had expropriated peasant lands in favour of the agribusiness class. In 1893 the liberals overthrew the conservative government and replaced it with the José Santos Zelaya government, whose relatively liberal policies brought the combined reaction of the conservatives and the Americans, who overthrew it in 1909. The conservative rule (1910–1925) ended in a bloody civil war, as the US-sponsored 'elected' government was overthrown in a coup by Emiliano Chamorro's partisans. Internal instability and open confrontations

of this period explain US marines' repeated occupation of Nicaragua for 19 years, from 1912 to 1925 and 1927 to 1933.

From 1927 to 1933 the liberals dominated the government thanks to the support of the US-trained National Guard, a situation deeply resented by Augusto Sandino who chose to fight the United States and its locally-supported governments. The brutal war ended in 1933, when the USA, as one of the conditions imposed by Sandino, agreed to withdraw from Nicaragua after transferring the command of the Guard to Anastasio Somoza Garcia. The stage was thus set for two events that determined the course of history in Nicaragua for the remainder of the century: the advent of the Somoza dictatorship and of Sandinismo, the ideological guideline of the Sandinista revolution.

As Somoza asserted his authority over the Guard, his first task was to order the murder of Sandino in 1934, followed by the brutal repression of his followers in the countryside. The latter organised army uprisings in 1937, 1940, 1948, 1954 and 20 times between 1958 and 1963.¹² Making himself president in 1937, Somoza shaped the institutional setting of Nicaragua's politics. His two sons inherited them; Luis Somoza ruled from 1957 to 1963 and Anastasio Somoza Debayle from 1967 to 1979 (with a hiatus between 1972 and 1974). As in most authoritarian rules, the institutions aimed at preserving total power for the Somozas while closing almost all avenues of democratic participation for the people. The cooptation of the elite (church, parties, business), the reliance on the corrupt, loyal and repressive National Guard and bureaucracy, and the facade and rigged elections constituted the pillars of the Somoza overpoliticised rule. Concerning 'elections', 'Somoza had so frequently called [them] during his rule that "election" for Nicaraguans meant "trickery"',¹³

In an overpoliticised state, the political participation and response of the opposition to the power holders is through overpoliticised means as well. In addition to the popular armed uprisings already mentioned, opposition to the Somoza rule took the form of armed confrontations against the regime by the upper classes. In almost a replay of the pre-Somoza politics, Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, the editor of *La Prensa*, inherited the mantle of the conservative opposition of the Chamorro lineage (although he denied being conservative) to the 'liberal' Somoza. He was involved in plots or armed uprisings or suspected of such involvement against the Somozas in 1944, 1948, 1954, 1956, 1959 and 1963. His opposition continued until he was murdered in 1978. These rebellions were often bloody. The Somozas used excessive violence against the opposition, especially the masses, as in 1956, when Somoza Garcia was assassinated by a young poet, and in 1963. Another formidable opposition to the Somoza rule was the Sandinista Front for National Liberation (FSLN) formed in 1961 by Leftist forces influenced by the Sandino struggle and dedicated to the armed overthrow of the Somoza rule. The opposition to the Somoza dynasty reached its apex in the 1970s, fed by the crisis that occurred in the wake of the 1972 Managua earthquake and the Somoza's government inadequate and cynical response to it. Most groups, including those previously coopted by the Somozas, joined forces under the leadership of the Sandinistas, to precipitate the demise of Somoza rule in 1979.

As the Sandinistas assumed power in 1979, their institutional choice was

determined by socioeconomic policies that repudiated the Somoza-type and US-inspired development model, their vision of democracy and their fear of opposition from the business sector allied with the United States, the far left and the remnants of the Somoza rule. At the first signs of violent opposition, the Sandinistas closed political avenues of participation and came to rely on overpoliticised institutions that revolved around a party-state.¹⁴ As the opposition became more violent and the Sandinistas were cornered by a bloody war waged by the US-supported Contras, the Sandinista state became more repressive. Among the overpoliticised opposition groups were the landed and industrial sector, instrumental in raising the Contra army, political parties, the Chamorro family-owned *La Prensa*, the Catholic Church's hierarchy and Miskito Indians, all of whom clashed in one way or another with the Sandinistas. Weakened by sustained attacks by the Contras and by internal opposition, the Sandinistas bowed to pressure for general elections in 1990. They were defeated by a coalition of opposition groups and parties (Union Nacional Opositora-UNO) led by Violeta Chamorro and supported by the United States.

The Chamorro regime, emerging under the auspices of the worldwide democratization movement of the 1990s, should in principle have deviated from the pattern of overpoliticisation of its predecessors. However, it has not. In addition to the bleak socioeconomic picture, the relationship between holders of state power and the populace has been marred by gross human rights violations decried even by the USA.¹⁵ The spectre of a renewed civil war haunts the polity because of a sharp polarisation of forces, which are unable to reach compromise on constitutional issues, private property and military leadership. Among obvious signs of overpoliticisation one notes the use of money to buy votes in the parliament;¹⁶ the legislative coup of September 1992 that led to the occupation of the legislature by the government police after the National Assembly president, Alfredo Cesar's, illegal electoral procedures resulted in confrontation between his allies and Chamorro's; armed rebellions by the former Contras (the 'Recontras') in 1992 and 1993; the 18 May 1993 suspension of constitutional rights caused by mounting armed opposition to the government; the July 1993 Esteli bloody armed rebellion by former Sandinista soldiers; the August 1993 attacks and hostage taking of government and political leaders by both the Recontras and the former Sandinista militants; and strikes accompanied by deaths. These crises were present in 1994 and have persisted in 1995. The Recontras attacked and killed Indian villagers and farmers in December 1994, and the army's response in January 1995 led to an alleged massacre of Recontras. The constitutional impasse intensified in 1995 as the reforms adopted by the legislature were rejected by President Chamorro, who refused to promulgate them. In defiance of the president, the legislature promulgated the reforms, thus creating a constitutional duality; President Chamorro and her cabinet recognise the 1987 constitution enacted by the Sandinistas while the legislature recognises the reformed constitution.¹⁷

Haiti's political history was marked at the outset by its bloody revolutionary war of independence. From 1804 to 1915, a period dominated by the rules of Jean-Jacques Dessalines and Henri Christophe, 19 rulers occupied the political scene. Only four of them completed their terms. From 1911 to 1915, all six

rulers were murdered or overthrown by mass uprisings. From 1807 to 1821, as a result of centrifugal forces, the country was divided into two separate republics led by two different leaders. Factionalism led to chaos, and political competition could take place only through violent means supplied by regional and private armies maintained by local leaders, the *cacos*. The response to generally autocratic and militaristic leadership, often surrounded by the trappings of representation such as a parliament and elections, took the form of mass uprisings and military coups, especially around elections.

In the years between 1902 and 1915, amid instability, repression and bureaucratic ineptitude, attempts made by political leaders, such as Antenor Firmin, to reform the political system were easily defeated. Many Haitian political figures viewed the reliance on 'Generalissimos' as a *sine qua non* for stability. The result was unending confrontation and civil wars. Occurring against the background of competing foreign, including German, interests in Haiti, the tensions that would become World War I, and Haiti's instability and vulnerability to European penetration, these confrontations triggered a US occupation of the country in 1915.

Because stability and democracy were its objectives, the US occupation helped to write a new constitution, organise elections, and train Haiti's military, the *garde*, as it had in Nicaragua. The record of the occupation was mixed at best. By 1929 there were agitations against US occupation; in 1930 the anti-American coalition elected Stenio Vincent as President. The United States withdrew in 1934.

By 1933 Vincent instituted authoritarian rule and was backed by the US-trained army that had become easily overpoliticised. All his successors, from Elie Lescot to the six successive provisional governments of 1956-57 that preceded Duvalier, did the same. Almost all were overthrown by the military or mass uprisings.

The military and US support was crucial for François Duvalier's success in the presidential elections of 1957. Duvalier understood better than most of his predecessors the requirements of an overpoliticised state. He saw military support as a double-edged sword that could easily overthrow his regime. This acute awareness explained his paranoia about security, his unexpected sharp turn to dictatorship, his reliance on highly fractionalised, parallel and mutually suspicious security apparatuses, including the army, palace guards, secret police (*Tontons Macoutes*), and voodoo priests. And as in all overpoliticised states, the support he received depended on a high level of material resources given to his supporters, the vicious repression of the opposition and the manipulation of political institutions. Manipulation made Duvalier president for life, the parliament pliant to his orders, and his son, Jean-Claude Duvalier, the constitutional successor in 1971. Despite early attempts to 'modernise' his authoritarianism, Jean Claude Duvalier fell easily back on his father's legacy and became as repressive. From 1957 to 1986 when the Duvalier dynasty was overthrown, the opposition's response to the regime was through countless assassination, coup and invasion attempts. Most of these failed, leading to a massive exodus of Haitians who sought asylum elsewhere.

The post-Duvalier era and the 1990s inaugurated what was supposed to be the

democratisation process in Haiti. But it was not to be. From 1986 to 1991 four military takeovers alternated with two presidential elections, punctuated by state and mob violence. President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, whose election gave some hope, was overthrown by the military in 1991. Attempts by the United States and the UN to return him to power met stiff resistance from the military, in violation of the Governor's Island Accord signed with Aristide in 1993. For the period of June to August 1993 alone, the UN and the Organisation of American States (OAS) documented 1309 cases of state-sponsored violence.¹⁸ These included disappearances, kidnappings, mysterious fires and assassinations in broad daylight in full view of police and the military.

Although displaying some obvious differences, Cambodia's pattern of over-politicisation resembles Nicaragua's and Haiti's. From 1953, when it gained its independence from France, to 1970, when the first military coup took place, Cambodia was headed by King Norodom Sihanouk. To distinguish his role from that of a king in a parliamentary regime, who is a mere figurehead, Sihanouk abdicated his king's throne in favour of his father; he became a prince, which allowed him to play a more active role in political affairs as a permanent head of state. A multiparty system, in which Sihanouk's party was dominant and (in the late 1950s and the 1960s) a party-state, a parliament and elections formed the pillars of Cambodia's electoralist system. From 1947 to 1955, the Democratic Party, the Liberal party and the Khmer Renovation Party were the three major parties competing for votes. Winner of both pre-independence elections in 1947 and 1950, the Democratic Party's tenure in office was characterised by authoritarianism and instability caused by political assassinations and the Issarak rebels, who battled the government. By 1953 Sihanouk had assumed authoritarian powers, punctuated by the repression of rebelling peasants, arrests of political opponents and censorship. In the post-1955 period, all political parties lost their autonomy and were incorporated into a monolithic structure dominated by Sihanouk's party-state, the Sangkum Reastr Niyum. Because of this monolithism, the 1958 and 1962 elections were rubber-stamp affairs that confirmed the power of the Sangkum. And although the 1966 elections were openly contested, forces allied to the Sangkum formed the majority in the new Assembly despite a good showing by leftist forces.¹⁹ As in all overpoliticised states, monolithism rested on a high level of resource manipulation (eg corruption) to maintain allegiance. The result was economic stagnation and mass rebellion.

The rebellions were multi-faceted. Three major forces emerged: Khmer Rouge, Khmer Serei (an offshoot of the earlier Issarak rebellion), and Khmer Loeu (mountain people). From 1967 to 1970 the revolts spread throughout Cambodia, culminating in 1967 and 1968. In 1968 the Khmer Rouge were influential in 11 provinces. Cambodia's proximity to Vietnam facilitated a linkage between the Khmer Rouge and the North Vietnamese and Vietcong, thus exacerbating the situation. Against this overpoliticised background, General Lon Nol, influential in Cambodia's politics since pre-independence days, overthrew Prince Sihanouk in 1970.

Lon Nol accused Sihanouk of one-man rule, economic mismanagement and softness on communists, despite the fact that he had been Sihanouk's repressive

against internal leftist forces and peasants. He promised democracy. With military and economic assistance, the Lon Nol government engaged in direct military operations against the Vietcong who had penetrated deep into Cambodian territory, the Khmer Rouge, who had tactfully joined forces with Prince Sihanouk, and other insurgent groups. The war intensified tensions that resulted in massive repression against dissidents and peasants while an electoralist front was being maintained. It also accelerated economic decline, internal fractionalism and bureaucratic ineptness, factors that, in turn, strengthened peasant opposition and the Khmer Rouge's resolve to overthrow the Lon Nol government. The Khmer Rouge succeeded in 1975, when the combined economic and military collapse of the Lon Nol regime allowed the Khmer Rouge to assume power.

Khmer Rouge's tenure in office from 1975 to 1979 under Pol Pot is well known for its dramatic attempts to transform Cambodian society totally. Because of its pattern of overpoliticisation displayed a high level of repression in the form of forceful displacement of the populations, forced labour and deaths. In this, it resembled Sihanouk's and Lon Nol's regimes in that the institutional setting was authoritarian and opposition to the regime took place through violent means, namely the Vietnam-backed violent overthrow of the Pol Pot regime in 1979. Despite Vietnam's involvement, it is important to note that the overthrow was initiated by former Khmer Rouge cadres (eg Heng Samrin) who expressed their opposition to the Khmer Rouge by allying themselves with the Lon Nol regime.

Like the Lon Nol regime, the Vietnam-backed regime of Heng Samrin and Hun Sen (1979-91) represented a change from the harshness of the Pol Pot regime.²⁰ In many aspects, however, it did not differ from its predecessors. The institutional setting was sharply authoritarian; internal dissent was not allowed; opposition to the regime by Sihanouk's forces, Khmer Rouge and other factions was violent and outside the established institutional limits; and electoralism was practised. The institutional setting of all Cambodian regimes were overpoliticised was summed up by Prince Sihanouk in 1984: 'Now we know what dictatorship really is: the dictatorship of the Khmer Rouge, the dictatorship of Heng Samrin, the dictatorship of Lon Nol, the dictatorship of Sihanouk.'²¹

Vietnam's presence in Cambodia was widely condemned by the UN. In 1991, UN-US-French leadership, Cambodian fighting factions signed an agreement in Paris to cease military hostilities, organise elections, and form a new government. To this end, the UN organised its largest peace operation, which included a ceasefire and prepared elections amid persistent violence and bloodshed. The Khmer Rouge opposed the elections and battled governmental and UN forces. Anti-Sihanouk forces attacked the office of the royalist party headed by Sihanouk's son, Prince Ranariddh, and killed about 40 royalist officials and royal voters were intimidated and terrorised.²² When elections were finally held in May 1993, four parties participated: the royalist party (FUNCINPEC), the party led by the former leaders of the Vietnam-backed regime (CPP), the Cambodian Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (BLDP) and the anti-communist party (MOLINAKA). They obtained, respectively, 58, 51, 10 and one seats in the National Assembly. The Khmer Rouge boycotted the elections and did not obtain any seats. Prince Sihanouk was recrowned king in September 1993 and made head

of state. The formation of a coalition government was marred by threats of secession, partition, renewal of civil war and accusations of electoral fraud. Violence against the winning party became rampant while the Khmer Rouge, kept out of the political negotiations, battled the interim government's forces. The UN presence did not reestablish peace, a situation exacerbated by the absence of the Khmer Rouge in the political negotiations. In 1994, there was an attempted military coup and the Khmer Rouge was unilaterally banned by the government, prompting fiercer fighting by the Khmer Rouge. King Sihanouk's calls to the Khmer Rouge in 1995 to participate in 'democratic' competition have been rejected by both the Khmer Rouge and political parties opposed to it. The chaotic situation has fuelled talks about a takeover of executive powers by King Sihanouk, which would in fact cause a reversion of Cambodia's 'democratic' politics to Sihanouk's previous dictatorial rule.

Togo, like Cambodia, experienced autonomy before formal independence in 1960. From 1956 to 1958 an autonomous government was established under the leadership of pro-French Nicolas Grunitzky. Soon, it displayed signs of overpoliticisation as arbitrariness characterised its policies. By winning the UN-sponsored elections in 1958, Sylvanus Olympio, the leader of the Comité de l'Unité Togolaise (CUT), assumed power from 1958 to 1963. Olympio's tenure in office further revealed deep signs of overpoliticisation. The regime imposed repressive measures against its opponents, established a one-party state in 1962, and disqualified emerging electoral coalitions. Its conservative fiscal policies angered the veterans of the colonial army, who were being forcibly retired. Led by Etienne Eyadema, who personally killed President Olympio,²³ the veterans carried out the first *coup d'état* in Togo, indeed in sub-Saharan Africa. Yet the army did not officially assume political power. Instead, power was handed back to Grunitzky, who was sympathetic to the military's demands. But the stage was set for instability. The army's *de facto* control over power, the bitterness created by Olympio's murder, internal infighting and economic unrest led to an attempted mass revolt against Grunitzky in 1966. Because the revolt constituted a threat to the leadership of the army, the latter rescued the Grunitzky government only to overthrow it months later in 1967.

The 1967 coup brought General Eyadema to power. From 1967 to 1990 the Eyadema regime remained one of the most autocratic regimes in Africa, closely imitating Zaire's Mobutu. The institutional setting became monolithic as political parties were outlawed and all previous electoralist structures abolished. In 1969 a party-state, the Rassemblement du Peuple Togolais, replaced all parties. The maintenance of monolithism rested on a high level of repression and resource manipulation, which bred corruption and economic mismanagement. As in other authoritarian rule, a more circumscribed form of electoralism replaced that which prevailed under the 1958–66 'democratic' regimes. As a result, the opposition's response to power holders took place outside established institutions. Long-lived as it is, the Eyadema regime is one of the most challenged. Attempts to overthrow the regime were made not only internally but in neighbouring countries (eg Ghana), Europe and North America, especially by Olympio's family. In addition to plots to assassinate General Eyadema, aspects of permanent insurgency include a mercenary infiltration in 1977 and bomb explosions in Lomé, the capital city, in 1985.

The 1990 democratisation process in Togo aimed, as elsewhere, to replace authoritarian monolithism. The main institutional framework through which the process was organised was the *Conférence Nationale*, a representative gathering that debated political, economic, and social issues of the transition to democracy. The *Conférence Nationale* set up, in turn, a transitional legislative body, the *Haut Conseil de la République*, and a transitional government led by Joseph Kokou Koffigoh. The purpose, as in other African French-speaking countries, was to organise general elections. However, in Togo as in Zaire, the debate about the fate of autocratic rulers threatened their leader more than similar debates in other countries, where authoritarian leaders did not enjoy as long a stay in office and did not fear as much retribution. As a result, Eyadema and his supporters reacted violently to the transitional institutions. Using the army, they sought to overthrow these institutions in October 1991. In December 1991 Eyadema's praetorian guard attacked the office of the transitional prime minister, leaving over 200 dead and injured. Opposition leaders were terrorised and some of them, such as Gilchrist Olympio, escaped assassination attempts. By 1992 Eyadema's forces controlled, through terror, the 'transitional' institutions. Exercising a monopoly on the media and financial resources, Eyadema organised 'general elections' in August 1993, in which he won 96.4% of the votes amid protests from international observers and the opposition.²⁴ The 'transition' to democracy resulted, ironically, in the return to authoritarianism, although somewhat mitigated by the February 1994 slim victory of the opposition in the legislative elections.

But the opposition's slim victory has not improved the chances of democracy or stability. Although a coalition government was formed under Edem Kodjo, the leader of one of the coalition parties, the opposition boycotted parliamentary sessions for a good portion of 1995. Extra-parliamentary armed opposition remains active and has vowed to overthrow the government by force. Eyadema's reliance on the army and his unwillingness to relinquish many of the policy prerogatives have hampered Prime minister Kodjo's actions, further eroding the chances of democratic accountability.

Thus, rather than stability and democracy as sought by foreign powers, the four case studies show consistent patterns of overpoliticisation from independence to the 1990s. The next section discusses how, contrary to the 'weak state' argument, foreign powers have been drawn by internal forces of the four third world countries into accommodating overpoliticisation, and not vice versa.

Foreign powers and accommodation to overpoliticisation

For space reasons, a lengthy narrative of US and French interests in the four third world countries is not necessary since these interests are well known. They are summarised in Table 1.

Because I have asserted that these interests rest on the auxiliary need expressed by both the United States and France to achieve democracy and stability in the four third world countries, some preliminary comments are in order. Whereas the two foreign powers' need for stability is generally acknowl-

TABLE I
 US French and UN Interests in Nicaragua, Haiti, Cambodia and Togo

USA Strategic	Nicaragua Atlantic-Pacific Road (1850 Clayton-Bulwer Treaty) Base for 1954 invasion of Guatemala Base for 1961 invasion of Cuba Centre of Regional anti-communist alliance Superpower interests	Haiti Mole Harbor 60-mile Windward Passage to Panama Canal Pre-1915 prevention of European encroachment via control of cabinets and strategic posts Superpower interests	Cambodia Replace European powers (France) Anti-communist military bases (1970-75) Strategic bombing sites (1970-75) Superpower interests	Togo Superpower interest
	Markets Investments Raw Materials (coffee, cotton)	Markets/Trade Some investments Bars on immigrants	-	Investment (phosphate)
Ideological/ cultural	Anti-communism	Against French Education system (1915-1934) Anti-immigration	Anti-communism Some linguistic ties	Propagation of the English language
FRANCE Strategic Economic	- Some trade	Port Facilities Commercial links Raw materials (coffee)	- Commercial links	Military base rights Supremacy in imports/exports Investments (phosphate) Education system Linguistic ties
Ideological/ cultural	-	Education system Linguistic ties	Education system Linguistic ties	Peace
U/N	Peace	Peace	Peace	Peace

edged, there is scepticism in the academic debate about their search for democracy. Unfortunately, the reasons given for the scepticism are not persuasive on three grounds. First, there is ample documentation about the call and search for democracy by the US and France both during the earlier period and during the current 'democratization' era. I will cite only a few examples. John Quincy Adams, as US Secretary of State, refused to recognise Latin American countries because he did not see 'any prospect that they will establish free or liberal institutions of government'.²⁵ President Woodrow Wilson's involvement in Haiti's internal affairs from 1913 to 1921 was predicated on his 'fundamental distaste for societies in which violent political change and revolution formed the major mode of political expression. He asked for representative democracy, human rights and anti-Europeanism'.²⁶ Such a call is echoed by more recent ones, eg under the Reagan Administration, when in 1984 and 1986 Secretary of State George Schultz subordinated US assistance to Haiti to the establishment of democracy, and under the Clinton Administration with its muscular policy aimed at restoring democracy. Even under the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua, Luis Somoza (1956-63) confessed that the US government preferred that he be more of a democrat than his father.²⁷ In Cambodia and Togo, the search for democracy during the earlier period was associated with France's desire to make its former colonies, upon relinquishing political power to them, a carbon copy of its liberal democratic institutions. Indeed, by 1946 France promised to 'develop democratic and representative institutions' in its then soon-to-be free colonies. This promise was followed by calls and policies aimed at achieving this objective even though some nationalist groups, especially in Cambodia, opposed it on several grounds. The most recent calls for democracy in these countries are also known. In the case of France and Togo, France's request for democracy came in the form of pressure put on all African French-speaking countries for their democratization by President François Mitterand at La Baule in 1990.²⁸

Second, even if one considers the 1947-1985 period, when 'anti-communism' dictated much foreign policy, such policy was not inconsistent with the search for democracy. In fact, in many cases, the two were interchangeable because, on logical grounds, the ideological interests of Western democratic states are better served in a liberal democratic environment. The Reagan Administration's crusade against the Sandinista government from 1980 to 1990 aimed, by its own admission, at overthrowing 'communist dictatorship' in favour of liberal democracy. In Cambodia in the 1950s, the United States was 'pressing swords into [Cambodians'] hands for a crusade against an unrecognized communism in the name of a democracy they have never known'.²⁹ Third, it is true that concerns for stability have often prevailed over concerns for democracy. But this has been so not because democracy is not an objective but rather, and precisely as I argue, because attempts to impose both have often failed. Given that, on balance, instability is more detrimental to foreign interests than lack of democracy, and can more easily be eliminated through violent and authoritarian means than democracy can be established, foreign powers choose, in the short run, to impose stability first. That Samuel Huntington, one of the most influential academics in US foreign policy circles, advocated stability ('strong political institutions') at the expense of democracy is consistent with the fact that, in his view, 'instead

of a trend towards competitiveness, and democracy, there has been an erosion of democracy ... Instead of stability, there have been repeated coups and revolts'.³⁰ In other words, earlier calls for democracy and stability having failed, there was a need (by 1965 when Huntington wrote) to seek stability first through strong institutions.

In short, then, stability and democracy remain the two auxiliary means to the pursuit of foreign powers' interests. Yet the USA, France and the UN have been forced to accommodate overpoliticisation, that is antistability and antidemocratic forces in the four countries. This last section of the article attempts to show how.

In Nicaragua, the USA was forced to accommodate overpoliticisation as early as 1855 when William Walker, invited by the liberals, went to their rescue against the conservatives. Again in 1909 the US marines invaded the country at the request of the conservatives, who sought to prevail over the liberals in their internal political struggle. From 1909 to 1933 US policies (eg organising biased elections in favour of the conservatives) aimed to accomplish this objective. From independence to the rise of Somoza, US intervention resulted from the fact that internally overpoliticised forces in Nicaragua 'unhesitatingly sought rescue from foreign powers'.³¹ By honouring these requests, the USA was drawn into accommodating overpoliticisation and contradicting its own premises of stability and democracy. In this sense, the advent of the Somoza dynasty and Sandino's rebellion, which may appear to have been 'made' by the USA, were in fact a by-product of the USA being forced to accommodate internal overpoliticisation in Nicaragua.

One of the Somoza dynasty's most striking features was the ability of the Somozas to cultivate friendly personal ties with US officials, allowing them to manipulate Americans into accepting overpoliticisation.³² At the height of the Somoza repression, not only did the USA train the National Guard but the US ambassador was a close friend of the Somozas. 'He traveled with them, dined with them in their private reunions, and helped them to govern. He undermined any US goodwill by always siding, in his report and attitudes, with the Somozas.'³³ When Anastasio Somoza Garcia was assassinated, the Somoza family sought and obtained the help of the US ambassador against the challenge of the conservatives. Because of their complicity with the Somozas, Pedro Joaquin Chamorro compared US ambassadors in Nicaragua to Pontius Pilate, the Roman proconsul in Judea who allowed Jesus' death, and Somoza to Herod.³⁴ Moreover, Americans were recruited as torturers in the Somoza security apparatus. That internal forces made the US adopt overpoliticisation, and not the opposite, was confirmed by Nicaraguans themselves who spoke of a 'country for sale with no down payments', a 'country sold out', and a country that 'gave birth to the dictators, but the United States incubated them'.³⁵

As forceful as US support was for the Contras and other anti-Sandinista forces, such support occurred because of internal overpoliticised opposition to the Sandinistas. As former members of Somoza's hated National Guard opposed to the Sandinista government, the Contras were in a sense the continuation of the Somocista regime's ability to lure the USA into accepting overpoliticisation. 'If anything is going to change in our country, it will be thanks to the combined effort of the US and the people here with rifles,' one contra military leader

proclaimed.³⁶ Because many of the prominent anti-Sandinista leaders had exiled themselves to the United States, they were able to 'recruit' the Reagan Administration, making the process a two-way road. The Catholic Church, through Archbishop Obando y Bravo, sought financial support from US businessmen to create anti-Sandinista groups.³⁷ Beyond these direct requests from the internal opposition and regardless of ideological justifications, any support lent by the US to the opposition against the Sandinista government outside the existing institutional framework meant accommodation to overpoliticisation. It highlighted the inability of the United States to frame its opposition in less violent terms than those of the internal groups or in the absence of their expectations.

This inability is also displayed under the Chamorro electoralist government. Inasmuch as Chamorro's rule is electoralist and overpoliticised, the US support for it indicates, despite claims of 'democratic rule', an accommodation to overpoliticisation in three ways. First, the US role in the advent of the Chamorro regime cannot be understood unless placed within the broad context of the confrontations among different overpoliticised groups under the Sandinista regime. US accommodation to groups opposed to the Sandinistas had resulted in military pressure that forced the Sandinistas to hold and lose elections in 1990. In this sense, US support for the winning coalition led by Violeta Chamorro represented not a 'victory for democracy', but a display of the ability of some of these overpoliticised groups to force the USA to join their side of the overpoliticisation. Pre- and post-elections calls by the Chamorro group and regime for US assistance and the US response only confirmed this situation. It is no surprise then that even as President Chamorro received \$50 million in US aid in 1993 and was delighted that the Clinton administration 'has finally decided to throw its considerable weight behind her', the US complained about her government's abuse of human rights.³⁸ Also telling, both Bush and Clinton administrations freed funds for the Chamorro government despite its failure to satisfy their condition of returning expropriated assets to their former owners. In February 1995 former President Bush was invited to Nicaragua by the Chamorro government to celebrate, not her presidency, but her *victory over* the Sandinistas. To the extent that political developments in Nicaragua show that the Chamorro regime is overpoliticised, its invitation to Bush means in fact an invitation to celebrate and accommodate her side of overpoliticisation.

Second, the overpoliticised split of the Chamorro coalition (UNO) caused US officials to take sides; whereas the administration supported Chamorro, Senator Jesse Helms and others supported the Alianza Política Opositora (APO). The split has widened in 1995 as UNO has completely deserted Chamorro, and some of its members have more strongly asserted their conservative views. Adding to the constitutional impasse, the internal split has strengthened the split in Washington. As Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Helms has been able to respond to the calls by the APO-UNO anti-Chamorro coalition. The Clinton Administration, on the other hand, via the IMF and the World Bank, supports the Chamorro government.³⁹ Although it is customary to explain the Washington split as the result of US domestic politics, the reality is that Nicaragua's overpoliticised factions have sought support from both powerful sides of US

politics. Because of this reality, the US response from each side is perform an accommodation to overpoliticisation in Nicaragua.

Third, the US accommodation to overpoliticisation is further revealed by acceptance, however reluctantly, of Sandinistas in the Chamorro government, especially their control over the army, to prevent bloody confrontation. Fear of the Sandinistas and of bloody conflicts means that the USA is forced to accept the 'realities' of overpoliticised Nicaragua. As one observer put it: 'The structures of power [in Nicaragua] do not precisely conform to the principles of democratic government. Violeta Chamorro was elected president in 1990 on the strength of her promise to establish a Western-style democracy ... But everyone knows that Mrs Chamorro has no real authority over General Ortega.'⁴⁰ The fact that General Ortega has now resigned from his position as the army chief of staff does not affect the argument.

As in Nicaragua, Haiti's pre-1915 chaotic situation had led internal antagonistic forces to seek foreign support. Reformist forces (eg the Firminists) who battled status quo forces (eg President Alexis Nord) sought foreign support against each other. Despite its commitment to democracy and stability, the USA was aware that 'the butcher sentiment is too strong in Haiti to be overcome by foreign sentiment ... and Haiti [is] an autocratic state that follows the policies of Toussaint Louverture and always will'.⁴¹ Such awareness and the call from internal forces caused the USA to embrace the anti-reform side of overpoliticisation, namely the increasingly repressive government of Alexis Nord. From Nord's overthrow in 1908 to 1915, the USA faced the same choice between equally overpoliticised factions, which offered economic and financial incentives (eg US control of Haiti's customs) in return for US military support against their opponents. The 1915 occupation by the marines only reinforced the pattern. Although the US imposed a modicum of political stability, it came at the expense of democratic rule. The occupation forces were invited to share—and accepted—joint dictatorship with the repressive 'mulatto elite', by whom 'the presence of the Americans was welcomed as a means of ensuring the suppression of the popular will ... and support for the ascendancy of the light-skinned bureaucratic aristocracy'.⁴² The commission of inquiry that investigated the occupation policies in 1930 recognised the inability of the occupation forces to overcome overpoliticisation: 'Until the basis of political structure is broadened by education—a matter of years—the government must necessarily be more or less unstable and in constant danger of political upheavals.'⁴³

That instability and authoritarianism returned immediately after the US withdraw from Haiti in 1934 confirmed the sentiment of the commission. In light of this reality, US support for François Duvalier in the 1957 elections cannot be viewed as support for 'democracy'—which the USA itself had failed to establish—but an accommodation with one side of overpoliticised factions. Duvalier's promise of upholding democratic principles had convinced the Americans to support him; however, not only did many US officials, including the US ambassador, Gerald Drew,⁴⁴ doubt the sincerity of Duvalier's rhetoric, Duvalier was also acutely aware that such rhetoric was essential to secure both power and the support of the USA in the face of inescapable confrontations with his political adversaries.

As he was cornered and tested by unyielding overpoliticised factions (eg Fignole, Dejoie and Jumelle and their partisans) after assuming office, Duvalier made an immediate sharp turn to dictatorship. He retained well-placed Americans as public relations advisors to smooth his relations with Washington and to further convince the US government to accommodate his overpoliticised rule. He succeeded. Although it was clear to the USA that the army had manipulated the results of the elections to ensure Duvalier's victory and that the regime was using extremely violent and dictatorial methods, 'US officials underlined that Duvalier still controlled Haiti and it was in the best American interests to maintain relations'.⁴⁵ In addition to training Duvalier's army, the USA provided financial and technical assistance, amounting to roughly \$18.5 million from 1959 to 1962. Duvalier's 'control', that is his ability to impose overpoliticisation on the USA, remained solid up to his death in 1971. That year, faced with a Navy rebellion, he could still make US ambassador, Clinton Knox, profess that 'President Duvalier's position seems solid to me'.⁴⁶ US policies faced the same constraints under Jean-Claude Duvalier, which led to an increase of economic assistance to his regime.

Yet, as an assortment of military officers and civilians plotted against the Duvalier dynasty by 1985, they imposed their own brand of overpoliticisation on the USA by inviting it to be a participant in the plot, which it did through its ambassador, Clinton McManaway, Jr. Moreover, fearing violence and civil war, the US was persuaded by the plotters—against its own established policy at the time—to make important concessions to the *Tonton Macoutes*, the very pillars of the regime being plotted against.⁴⁷ In the post-Duvalier era, the USA has maintained a consistent policy of accommodating the overpoliticised faction that 'controls' the situation. The debate about the Aristide regime and the earlier inability of the Clinton Administration to return President Aristide to power in Haiti testified to this situation. Notwithstanding the ideological motives behind US officials' opposition to Aristide, their claims that Haiti has never been a democracy and will never be,⁴⁸ and that Aristide should have made more concessions to the military, revealed the ability of internal forces in Haiti to force the USA to accommodate overpoliticisation. Indeed, because of the army's position in Haiti's politics, it was able to persuade the CIA to lead a misinformation campaign against Aristide and to cause US military officials to train the Haitian army despite the embargo against military assistance to Haiti imposed after the overthrow of President Aristide.⁴⁹ And although framed as an attempt to rescue democracy, President Clinton's final decisive support for the electoralist Aristide regime in September 1994 represented also an embrace of one side of overpoliticisation. This is consistent with the accurate assessment by the anti-Aristide forces that, although elected, the regime was not democratic during its brief tenure in office. Aristide's exile and lobbying in Washington, conducted under the aegis of the Clinton Administration against the Cedras military regime, resembled US-based Nicaraguans' lobbying against the Sandinista government during the Reagan-Bush era. In both instances, they recruited the US government and forced it to accommodate their side of the overpoliticisation. Massive electoral fraud mostly perpetrated by President Aristide's faction during the

recent June 1995 legislative elections, and US unwillingness to fully accept the Haitian opposition's protests in this regard, confirm this point.⁵⁰

In Cambodia, between 1955 and 1964, the US choice was determined by internal overpoliticisation represented by Sihanouk's authoritarianism and the opposition's insurgency. As Sihanouk advocated neutrality in international politics, the USA attempted to install a more pro-Western government by relying on overpoliticised internal opposition. But as in Haiti, Sihanouk still 'controlled' the situation, which forced the USA to support him even though he was thought of as 'dictatorial'. Despite the prevailing opinion that the US 'made' the Lon Nol coup, the reality is that internal overpoliticisation caused the coup; the USA only used the opportunities provided by it.⁵¹ Indeed, although the realities of the war in Vietnam encouraged US intervention in Cambodia, it was Lon Nol's reversal of Sihanouk's policy of keeping internal problems from becoming international that invited the USA's more aggressive stand in Cambodia by 1969. In other words, the US accommodated the overpoliticised faction of Lon Nol. Even Sihanouk, who accused the USA of imperialism, recognised this fact.

Before and after 1975 the USA and France sought to cultivate links with the very internal forces that they had once attempted to overthrow for not being democratic or pro-Western. For example, in 1975 before the Lon Nol government was militarily defeated, Prince Sihanouk, who was part of the armed resistance against the Lon Nol government, was approached by both the CIA and France to lend his support to a plot to liquidate the entire Khmer Rouge leadership once it entered Phnom Penh, the capital city. Sihanouk declined the offer.⁵² After the Khmer Rouge were overthrown by the Vietnam-backed Heng Samrin government, the USA attempted to destabilise it by joining existing insurgent groups: the Sihanouk group, the Khmer Serei and even the Pol Pot/Khmer Rouge group. Indeed, the USA and France voted to leave Cambodia's UN seat to the Pol Pot government, rather than to the Vietnam-backed Samrin government. Although such posturings were part of the manoeuvres of international politics and the US stance towards the Soviet Union, they do not detract from the main point. No other alternative for 'democracy' and 'stability' existed for the USA and France outside the many overpoliticised groups inside Cambodia. They had to join them because they could not beat them.

The 1993 elections did not change this situation. As the USA, France, and the UN sought to establish democracy, they could not help but ally themselves with overpoliticised forces. Because the Khmer Rouge have remained or been kept out of the elections, the advent of a King Sihanouk-centred government, like the Chamorro government in Nicaragua, did not represent democratic compromise but the other side of overpoliticisation. The support for the government by foreign powers and the UN was an embrace of this side of overpoliticisation, which explained Khmer Rouge military attacks on the government after the elections. The overpoliticised split of the internal political forces also explains the split among foreign powers, forced to take sides with internal forces. While the USA energetically opposed the Khmer Rouge's participation in order to save 'democracy', France favoured it in order to establish 'stability'. Either way, neither of the two objectives can be achieved because support for one side of the

internal forces exacerbates antagonism, which helps neither democracy nor stability.

In 1995 the Cambodian situation more closely resembles that of Nicaragua's and Haiti's electoralist regimes. Indeed, although they deplore corruption, censorship, human rights abuses, and other aspects of overpoliticisation described above, the USA, France (and the UK, Canada and Australia) still support the coalition government with economic, financial and military assistance (for example, the Paris Club eased Cambodia's debt burden and a pledge of \$1.35 billion in assistance has been made). Even King Sihanouk recognises the lack of democratic accountability when he asserts that 'Cambodia has a very strange democratic system' and would like foreign governments to 'persuade it to become really democratic.'⁵³ Here again, it is clear that foreign powers embrace a regime which is obviously not democratic; but this embrace is not the result of the 'free will' of foreign powers. Rather, it is because, faced with the equally overpoliticised Khmer Rouge alternative and the fact that there is no other 'more democratic' faction in Cambodia, they are forced to accommodate the overpoliticisation of the electoralist coalition government. The army remains the only other alternative open to foreign powers. (In the wake of the 1994 aborted coup, this option is feared by some Cambodian politicians such as Prince Sirivudh). By definition, however, such a recourse to the army would be a forced accommodation to overpoliticisation.

When in 1963 France backed the Grunitzky government that replaced the deposed Olympio government in Togo, its support was crucial in the overall success of the coup. However, France only joined internal overpoliticised forces, including the veterans who carried out the coup. France's military and economic interventions propped up the Eyadema regime on many occasions as they had regimes in many other African countries. An example is the 1986 intervention against the mercenary attack. Yet, because of the overemphasis on French imperialism, what is easily forgotten is the fact that France's military alliances with African countries are the result of reciprocal interests between African power holders and France. Because African power holders are vulnerable to internal overpoliticisation, they need military alliances with France that protect them while helping French interests as well. In other words, they, like the conservatives and liberals in Nicaragua, invite France to protect their side of overpoliticisation against their adversaries. This explains France's support for the Eyadema regime. Although France became aware, especially by 1982, of the insolvency of the regime, given the choice between an overpoliticised faction that 'controlled' the situation (ie the Eyadema regime) and another equally overpoliticised faction that did not control power, France chose the side that controlled the situation.

Togolese-French relations in the post-1990 'democratisation' period have obeyed the same logic. The 'permanent' invitation by the Eyadema regime to France manifested itself on several occasions during the confrontations between the Eyadema forces and pro-democracy opposition. Although it initiated the process of democratisation at the La Baule Conference in 1990, France did not intervene when Eyadema forces massacred opposition partisans in 1991 and 1993. Instead, it blamed the opposition, which in turn blamed France. France's

inability to dictate change in favour of the opposition, despite its pronouncements for democratic change, the mutual recriminations between it and the opposition, and its reluctant support of Eyadema in the post-election period clearly demonstrated the ability of the Eyadema regime to 'control the situation' and to force France to accommodate overpoliticisation. This situation explains why 'the French government has chosen a realistic policy [towards Togo]. It does no longer dream of immediate and crystal clear democracy, but leans toward progressive democratization based on stability'.⁵⁴ By 1995 France has resumed its pre-democratisation relations with Togo by influencing European Union members to increase their assistance to Togo and by strengthening its military assistance.⁵⁵ France's policy in Togo thus reflects its Cambodia policy. Unfortunately, as in Cambodia, the choice of stability over democracy cannot guarantee either one in an overpoliticised state.

Conclusion

If the record of stability and democracy in Nicaragua, Haiti, Cambodia, and Togo from 1804 to 1995 is an indicator of how the USA, France and, minimally, the UN have fared in their pursuit of this double objective, the preceding discussion suggests that they have not been successful. Undoubtedly, idiosyncratic factors in each of the four third world countries and in the two foreign powers influence the latter's failure and contradictorily accommodating behaviour towards instability and antidemocratic forces. Also, the specifics of accommodation vary in each case. In some, the accommodation occurs under authoritarian regimes and in others under electoralist regimes; some of the latter type of regimes are more open than others.

Nevertheless, the focus of this article has been the similar patterns of overpoliticisation shared by the four third world countries and their equally similar ability to impose accommodation to overpoliticisation on the foreign powers discussed. I have argued that the international politics of the four third world countries—their interaction with foreign powers—is characterised by these powers' accommodation to antistability and antidemocratic forces. As foreign actors (eg the USA and France) pursue their national interests in a third world country, they become political competitors in an overpoliticised state. Rather than foreign powers imposing their will on the overpoliticised internal actors, it is the latter that impose their will on foreign powers. Locked within the overpoliticised state, however small and weak, which they cannot steer beyond its two ends—authoritarian and electoralist regimes—foreign powers are forced to side with internal overpoliticised forces in these two types of regimes. They become as overpoliticised as their internal counterparts. Because such accommodation to overpoliticisation is antithetical to stability and democracy, it explains the failure of the USA, France, the UN and, by extension, other foreign powers to accomplish the double objective of imposing stability and democracy in the four third world countries.

The subordination of foreign powers to overpoliticisation of third world states suggests two conclusions. First, structural accommodation to overpoliticisation cannot be reduced to an outcome of the anti-communism of the Cold War era,

which allowed foreign powers to embrace 'authoritarians' against 'communist totalitarians', to use the Reagan regime's distinction. Even if one accepts that foreign interventions were often dictated by anti-communist sentiments, most interventions in Haiti, Togo and Nicaragua (except against the Sandinista government) have not been based on anti-communism. And, in any case, such anti-communist interventions did not explain foreign accommodation to overpoliticisation any more than interventions for economic or strategic interests did. Foreign interventions in and by themselves are not the issue, accommodation to overpoliticisation is. The accommodation suggests a trend and even a permanency that goes beyond specific events, a regime in time, or the type of national interests involved. Both authoritarian and electoralist regimes of the third world states impose it on foreign powers. Indeed, the accommodation of the third world foreign powers to overpoliticisation in the four third world countries in the 1990s, at a time when anticommunist motives do not dominate foreign policy, tends to support these points. Second, structural accommodation to overpoliticisation differs from simply stating that foreign powers face 'constraints' in the third world. At a minimum, international politics, like domestic politics, involves constraints; explaining the nature and implications of these constraints in the third world is intellectually more rewarding.

Therefore, these two conclusions beg the following question: how does one explain (1) the remarkable similarities in overpoliticisation in the four third world countries and (2) the equally remarkable similarities in foreign power accommodation to overpoliticisation in these countries, regardless of whether the latter are authoritarian or electoralist ('democratic') regimes. Differently put, why are the USA, France and the UN forced by internal actors in the four third world countries to accommodate overpoliticisation? The question takes us back to the issue of the theoretical explanation, which, as already indicated, cannot be attempted here. This essay has simply sought to provide some empirical elements of the double similarity.

In addition to potentially shedding light on how social, economic and historical factors intervene in the explanation of this double similarity, a theoretical explanation, if successful, should help in two ways. First, it should help establish the conceptual boundaries between comparative and international politics. Second, it should help address the perennial policy issue of whether the two objectives of stability and democracy can be achieved through foreign policy and its ordinary tools, such as diplomacy, force or economic and 'political' assistance in 'good governance' and 'crafting democracies'.⁵⁶

Notes

I want to thank Professor Jeffrey Hart of Indiana University, Dr Marcel Kitissou of SUNY Oswego, Anne Burke and the anonymous reviewer of *Third World Quarterly* for their helpful comments.

¹ James Caporaso, 'Introduction: the state in comparative and international perspective', in Caporaso (ed), *Elusive State: International and Comparative Perspectives*, (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1989), pp 7-16.

² See 'Special report: what in the world are we doing?', *Time*, 18 October 1993, pp 36-50; one of the main critics of the Clinton Administration was Henry Kissinger, who argued that the USA could not let Somalia before militarily punishing Aidid and his followers.

- ¹ Among the factors cited are (1) the limits imposed on foreign actors by the normative international system of the post-World War II era, which, by consecrating the sovereignty of each member state of the UN system, makes interference in its affairs by foreign actors more difficult and grants it the potential to manipulate even the most powerful of these actors. See R. Jackson & C. Rosberg, 'Sovereignty and underdevelopment, juridical statehood in the African crisis', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 24, (1) 1986 pp 1-31; Richard Cottam, *Competitive Interference and Twentieth Century Diplomacy*, Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1967, pp 26-27, 44ff; (2) the blind commitment of foreign actors to their national interests, which is often predicated on the 'creation' of authoritarian/dictatorial rulers and precludes any commitment to democracy. See C. Y. Thomas, *The Rise of Authoritarian States in Peripheral Society*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1984; Noam Chomsky & Edward S. Herman, *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1979; Tony Smith, 'The dependency approach', in Howard Wiarda (ed), *New Directions in Comparative Politics*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985, p 119; (3) the lack of a coherent foreign policy on the part of foreign powers, the result of domestic policy considerations; and (4) their lack of resolve and fear of military defeat.
- ² Among the many sources used for the analysis of Nicaragua are Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, *Estirpe Sangrienta: Los Somoza*, Mexico: Editorial Diogenes, 1957; Mary B. Vanderlaan, *Revolution and Foreign Policy in Nicaragua*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986; Patricia Taylor Edmisten, *Nicaragua Divided: La Prensa and the Chamorro Legacy*, Pensacola, FL: University of West Florida Press, 1990; Thomas W. Walker, 'Nicaragua: from dynastic dictatorship to social revolution', in Howard J. Wiarda & Harvey F. Kline (eds), *Latin American Politics and Development*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985; Peter Rosset & John Vandermeer (eds), *The Nicaragua Reader*, New York: Grove Press, 1983; Carlos M. Vilas, *State, Class and Ethnicity in Nicaragua: Capitalist Modernization and Revolutionary Change on the Atlantic Coast*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1989; Arturo J. Cruz, *Nicaragua's Continuing Struggle*, Freedom House, 1988; Jiri Valenta & Esperanza Duran (eds), *Conflict in Nicaragua*, Boston, MA: Allen & Unwin, 1987; Philip J. Williams, 'Dual transitions from authoritarian rule: popular and electoral democracy in Nicaragua', *Comparative Politics*, January 1994 pp 169-185; and Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America*, New York: Norton, 1984.
- ³ Among the sources used for the analysis of Haiti are Carolyn E. Fick, *The Making of Haiti*, Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 1990; Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Haiti and the Great Powers, 1902-1915*, Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1988; Sidney W. Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974; Bernard Diederich & Al Burt, *Papa Doc: The Truth about Haiti Today*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969; Hubert Cole, *Christophe, King of Haiti*, New York: Viking, 1967; Robert I. Rothberg, *Haiti: The Politics of Squalor*, Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1971; Elizabeth Abbot, *Haiti. The Duvaliers and their Legacy*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1988; Josh DeWind & David H. Kinley III, *Aiding Migration: The Impact of International Development Assistance on Haiti*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988; and O. Ernest Moore, *Haiti: Its Stagnant Society and Shackled Economy*, New York: Exposition Press, 1972.
- ⁴ Among the many sources used for the analysis of Cambodia are René Morizon, *Monographie du Cambodge*, Hanoi: Imprimerie d'Extreme Orient; Paul Collard, *Cambodge et Cambodgiens*, (Paris, 1925; Peter Poole, 'The expansion of the Vietnam War into Cambodia', Ohio University Center for International Studies, Southeast Asia Series No 17, 1970; George Hildebrand & Gareth Porter, *Cambodia: Starvation and Revolution*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976; Ben Kiernan & Chanthou Boua (eds), *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea, 1942-1981*, London: Zed Press, 1982; Khieu Samphan, 'Cambodia's economy and industrial development', Data Paper III, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1979; Sheldon W. Simon, *War and Politics in Cambodia: A Communication Analysis*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1974; Peter Schier & Manola Schier-Oum (eds), *Prince Sihanouk on Cambodia*, Hamburg, 1985; Jonathan Grant, I. A. G. Moss & J. Unger (eds), *Cambodia: The Widening War in Indochina*, New York: Washington Square Press, 1971; and Roger Smith, *Cambodia's Foreign Policy*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1965.
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- ¹² Walker, 'Nicaragua: from dynastic dictatorship to social revolution', p 513.
- ¹³ Edmisten, *Nicaragua divided: La Prensa and the Chamorro Legacy*, p 70.
- ¹⁴ Vanderlaan, *Revolution and Foreign Policy in Nicaragua*, pp 43-47.
- ¹⁵ Economist Intelligence Unit, *Nicaragua*, Third Quarter 1993.
- ¹⁶ *New York Times*, 12 July 1992.
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- ²⁶ Plummer, *Haiti and the Great Powers*, p 194.
- ²⁷ Edmisten, *Nicaragua Divided*, p 43.
- ²⁸ For further information about the search for democracy by the USA and France, see Vanderlaan, *Revolution and Foreign Policy in Nicaragua*, p 10; Moore, *Haiti: Its Stagnant Society and Shackled Economy*, pp 36-37; Abbot, *Haiti: The Duvaliers and their Legacy*, pp 283, 320; Smith, *Cambodia's Foreign Policy*, p 90; President Nixon's Address to the Nation, 30 April, 1970; Economist Intelligence Unit, *Togo*.
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- ³³ Chamorro, *Estirpe Sangrienta: Los Somoza*, p 29.
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- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp 37, 87, 16.
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- ⁴¹ Assistant Secretary of State, Alvey Adee, quoted by Plummer, *Haiti and the Great Powers, 1902-1915*, p 118.
- ⁴² Rotberg, *Haiti: The Politics of Squalor*, p 128.
- ⁴³ Moore, *Haiti: Its Stagnant Society and Shackled Economy*, p 58.
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Modern Asian Studies is published quarterly in February, May, July and October. Volume 29 in 1995: £98 for institutions; £46 for individuals; £35 for members of European Association for South East Asian Studies, Asian Studies Association and Asian Studies Association of Australia; delivery by airmail £19 per year extra.
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Pushing polyarchy: the US–Cuba case and the Third World

WILLIAM I ROBINSON

Since the late 1980s US policy makers have argued that the basis of the long-running US dispute with Cuba is the lack of 'democracy' in the Caribbean island nation. The Clinton Administration has made it clear that its policy, including any eventual normalisation of relations, will be based on democratisation inside Cuba. Yet, from the triumph of the Cuban revolution in 1959 to the late 1980s, the US–Cuba conflict was presented in Washington as a product of Cuba's 'security threat', emanating from Cuba's foreign policy of active engagement in the international arena, including its support for Third World national liberation movements and its alliance with the now defunct Soviet bloc. Therefore, the current assertion in Washington that the dispute is over democracy represents a little-perceived yet significant change in US policy towards Cuba.

This shift in policy, from an emphasis on external 'security' factors conditioning US–Cuban relations, to the emphasis on internal factors—that is, on Cuba's internal political system—is important on two accounts. First, it is central to an analysis of current US–Cuba relations and to prognostication on how these relations will unfold in the coming years. Second, it reflects an essential change in US foreign policy that dates back to the 1970s, came to fruition in the 1980s, is now being consolidated, and promises to play a major role in US foreign policy in the 'new world order'. This change has been described by policy makers, scholars and journalists as a shift towards 'democracy promotion'. The State Department now defines 'democracy promotion' as one of the three basic planks of US foreign policy, along with the promotion of 'free markets' and the maintenance of a US military capacity around the world. 'Support for democracy', declares one State Department policy document, 'is becoming the new organizing principle for American foreign policy'.¹

This change is largely unexplored. Many have applauded 'democracy promotion', with a surprising shallowness in theoretical analysis, as a positive and long-overdue change for the better in US policy. Those who have opposed US intervention abroad, while more sceptical regarding US intentions, have tended to view 'democracy promotion' as merely a continuation, under new rhetoric, of the same US interventionism of the past. In fact, both positions are off the mark, and reflect the failure to appreciate the profound changes at every level that are accompanying the rise of global capitalism, including changes in international political relations and transnational class formation.

I will present a theoretical argument in this paper which runs contrary to conventional wisdom and mainstream thinking on US 'democracy promotion', yet one which, I believe, will elucidate not only the context in which US–Cuban

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relations will unfold into the 21st century, but also the general dynamic of US foreign policy in the 'new world order'. This paper is divided into five parts. First, I will discuss in historic perspective the shift to what policy makers describe as 'democracy promotion'. Second, I will give brief theoretical treatment to the concepts of democracy, and define exactly what US policy makers mean when they say they are promoting 'democracy' in Cuba and elsewhere. Third, I will provide an explanation for this shift. Fourth, I will analyse the concrete mechanisms, in particular, 'political aid' programmes, through which this shift is taking place. Finally, I will link this analysis and the theoretical discussion to the case of Cuba and speculate on how US-Cuban relations might unfold. It must be emphasised that space limitations preclude a full exploration of the theoretical and analytical issues at hand. What follows is by necessity a simplification of complex issues and concepts.

From promoting dictatorship to promoting 'democracy'

'We have 50 percent of the world's wealth, but only 6.3 percent of its population ... In this situation we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment,' noted George Kennan in 1948, one of the most important architects of post-World War II United States foreign policy. 'Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will allow us to maintain this position of disparity,' said the then-Director of Policy Planning of the Department of State. 'We should cease to talk about the raising of the living standards, human rights, and democratization. The day is not far off when we are going to have to deal in straight power concepts. The less we are then hampered by idealistic slogans, the better.'²

Kennan's candid statement, contained in a top-secret document which discussed US strategy in the aftermath of World War II, is highly instructive on two accounts. First, it underscores the fact that the strategic objective of US foreign policy during the Cold War was less to battle a 'communist menace' than to defend gross inequalities in the international order (inequalities which were seen as under challenge by the spread of socialism) and the tremendous privilege and power this global disparity of wealth brought for the United States as the dominant world power. Second, Kennan's statement suggests that democracy abroad was not a major consideration for the United States in the formative years of the post-World War II order.

Four decades after Kennan's 1948 counsel, Carl Gershman, the President of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), a new agency in the US foreign policy apparatus created in 1983, admonished in a speech to the American Political Science Foundation: 'In a world of advanced communication and exploding knowledge, it is no longer possible to rely solely on force to promote stability and defend the national security. Persuasion is increasingly important, and the United States must enhance its capacity to persuade by developing techniques for reaching people at many different levels.' Gershman went on to emphasise in his speech, in sharp contrast to Kennan, that 'democracy' abroad, should be a major consideration for the United States, in its effort to 'enhance its capacity to persuade' around the world.³

The East–West prism in which Kennan and his generation had cast the North–South divide in foreign policy dictates evaporated with the end of the Cold War. Yet, as Gershman's statement suggests, the fundamental objective of maintaining international asymmetries in an unjust global system, to which Kennan alluded nearly half a century earlier, did not change with the collapse of the Soviet system. What *has* changed are the methods and strategies for securing this objective. What US policy makers term 'democracy promotion', and the ideological dimensions it entails, is being developed as an effective instrument of 'persuasion', in contrast to—or more often, alongside—force in assuring 'patterns of relationships' that protect US interests (and, increasingly, the collective interests of the North) in an unjust international system. In other words, this shift from 'straight power concepts' to 'persuasion' is predicated on the development of a new component in US foreign policy—'democracy promotion'.

The United States had risen from the ashes of World War II as the dominant world power, and policy makers had set about conceiving, developing and defending an international order largely under US-led Western domination. From World War II to the end of the Cold War, the United States employed military force across its borders over 200 times, became embroiled in large scale wars in Korea and Indochina and in 'small wars', counterinsurgency campaigns and covert operations throughout Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and Europe, including, as is well documented, against Cuba.⁴ Global interventionism was rationalised by the Cold War and the need to confront communism. But perceived competition from the former Soviet Union, while significant, was *not* the driving force behind foreign policy. Behind the 'communist threat' there has always been another, more fundamental threat: a challenge to 'patterns of relationships' which underpinned domination by the US-led bloc of core capitalist powers in the international system and prerogative derived from privileged position in an asymmetric international order.

National Security Council (NSC) Memorandum 68, one of the key US foreign policy documents of the postwar era, stated that postwar policy embraces 'two subsidiary policies'. One was to foster 'a world environment in which the American system can survive and flourish', and the other was containment of the Soviet Union, which 'seeks to foster the seeds of destruction within the Soviet system'. The Memorandum went on: 'Even if there was no Soviet Union we would face the great problem' of achieving global 'order and security'.⁵ Revealingly, a major focus of NSC-68 was not the Soviet Union at all, but securing US and Western access to the raw materials, markets and labour power of the Third World, and on assuring a political environment propitious to the operation of an increasingly international capital. Behind East–West relations, therefore, North–South relations were always intrinsic and central to the whole Cold War era.⁶

Although 'democracy' often entered the foreign policy-making vocabulary for reasons of convenience, or under the circumstances of specific moments, it was *not* the principal political form which the United States promoted in the Third World in the postwar years. In fact, as the historical record shows, the principal form was the development of strategic alliances with authoritarian and dictatorial

regimes. The outcome of intervention, whether intentional or an incidental byproduct, was the establishment and defence of authoritarian political and social arrangements in the Third World. The USA promoted and supported a global political network of civilian-military regimes and outright dictatorships in Latin America, white minority and one-party dictatorships of post-colonial elites in Africa, and repressive states in Asia (the Batista regime was but one example). Authoritarian political and social arrangements were judged to be the most expedient form of assuring stability and social control in the Third World required for the free operation of international capital. However, by the 1970s, mass popular movements were spreading against repressive political systems and exploitative socioeconomic orders established during the years of the Cold War. The structures of authoritarianism and dictatorship began to crumble, above all, in US client regimes, and a general crisis of elite rule in the South began to develop. As the 'elective affinity' between authoritarianism and US-led Western domination began to unravel, 'democracy promotion' was substituted for 'national security' as the vernacular in Washington. A 'democracy promotion' apparatus was created from the late 1970s to the early 1990s, including new governmental and quasi-governmental agencies and bureaus (including, but not limited to, the NED), policy studies and conferences by government and private policy planning institutes to draft and implement 'democracy promotion' programmes.⁷ Where it had earlier supported dictatorship, such as in Chile, Nicaragua, Haiti, the Philippines, Panama, Southern Africa and elsewhere, the USA now began to 'promote democracy'.

Democracy promotion promises to play a vital role in shaping a new international system. Under the rubric of promoting democracy, the USA has developed new modalities of engagement abroad in order to intervene in the crises, transitions and power vacuums resulting from the break-up of the old order and to try to reshape political and economic structures as a 'new world order' emerges. These modalities constitute precisely those newfound 'techniques for reaching people at many different levels' to which Gershman referred. Democracy promotion, as analysed below, is a way to relieve pressure from subordinate classes for more fundamental political, social and economic change. The impulse to promote democracy is the rearrangement of national political systems in the South so as to maintain elite based status quos in an unjust international system and to suppress mass aspirations for more thorough going democratisation of social life in the new world order. In more theoretical terms, the shift from backing authoritarianism to promoting 'democracy' represents the replacement, in a transnational setting, of coercive means of social control with consensual ones.

Polyarchy versus popular democracy

Democracy promotion has a crucial ideological dimension, given that democracy is a universal aspiration and the claim to promote it has mass appeal. The term 'democracy' is thrown around very loosely. But definitions can, and should, be precise. What US policymakers mean when they use the term democracy is actually what political scientist Robert Dahl has termed *polyarchy*, a system in

which a small group actually rules and mass participation in decision making is confined to leadership choice in elections that are carefully managed by competing elites. The polyarchic definition of democracy, building on early 20th century elitism theorists such as Gaetano Mosca and Vilfredo Pareto, developed in US academic circles closely tied to the policy-making community in the USA in the post-World War II years. According to Samuel Huntington, this 'redefinition' of the classical definition of democracy as rule, or power (*cratos*) of the people (*demos*) to make it more 'realistic' and 'compatible' with 'modern society', culminated in Dahl's 1971 study, entitled *Polyarchy*.⁸ By the time the USA rose to world power after World War II, the polyarchic definition of democracy had become established in Western academy. When US officials speak of 'promoting democracy', what they really mean, therefore, is the promotion of polyarchy, or what has elsewhere been referred to as 'low-intensity democracy'.⁹

It must be emphasised that democracy is what philosopher WB Gallie has termed an 'essentially contested concept'. This refers to a concept in which different and competing definitions exist, such that terms themselves are problematic since they are not reducible to 'primitives'. Each definition yields different interpretations of social reality.¹⁰ In this context, any attempt to address the issue of democracy and the US-Cuban dispute runs up against the following problematic: one particular definition of democracy, that of polyarchy, has achieved, in the Gramscian sense, hegemony among scholars, journalists, charismatic figures, policy makers and diplomats, not just in the USA, but in the international community and public discourse in general.

As an essentially contested concept, the polyarchic definition competes with the concept of *popular democracy*. The various views on popular democracy are traceable to the original Greek definition of democracy and rooted in Rousseauian-Marxist traditions. Popular democracy posits a disbursal throughout society of political power through the participation of broad majorities in decision making or forms of participatory, or direct, democracy, linked to representative forms of government and formal elections. Popular democracy is seen as an emancipatory project at whose heart is the construction of a democratic socioeconomic order. Democratic participation, in order to be truly effective, requires that democracy be a tool for changing unjust social and economic structures. In sharp distinction to polyarchy, popular democracy is concerned with both process and outcome. Elitism theories claim that democracy rests exclusively on process, so that there is no contradiction between a 'democratic' process and an anti-democratic social order punctured by sharp social inequalities and minority monopolisation of society's material and cultural resources. Thus, under the polyarchic definition, a system can acquire a democratic form without a democratic content or outcome. Popular democracy, in contrast, posits democracy as both a process and as a means to an end—a tool for change, for the resolution of such material problems as housing, health, education, land ownership, social inequalities and so forth. (It should be emphasised, however, that, although there is an abundance of literature on the concept of popular democracy, there is no fully elaborated *theory*. Such a theory would have to address the much-discussed issue of the institutional structures of

popular democracy and the *relation* between process and outcome in a popular democracy.¹¹)

Polyarchy's emphasis on process and disregard for outcome flows, in turn, from the theoretical premise of structural-functionalism that different spheres of the social totality are independent and linked externally to each other, and that the political sphere of the social totality, therefore, is separate from the social and economic spheres. US social scientists Larry Diamond, Juan J Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset, in their introduction to a widely circulated, four-volume series funded by the National Endowment for Democracy and entitled *Democracy in Developing Countries*, explain: 'We use the term democracy in this study to signify a political system, separate and apart from the economic and social system ... Indeed, a distinctive aspect of our approach is to insist that issues of so-called economic and social democracy be separated from the question of governmental structure.'¹²

What theoretical or historical justification exists for the separation of the political system from socioeconomic matters is not clear. What is clear is that, owing to the hegemony enjoyed by the polyarchic definition of democracy, scholars, journalists, diplomats and so on, routinely refer to Latin America as 'democratic' in the wake of the 1980s 'transitions' (with the exception of Cuba). Yet, if we replace the polyarchic definition with the popular definition of democracy, we could argue, as US political scientist Carl Cohen does, that democracy is not a 'constant' (either existing or not) but a 'variable' (more or less of it), and democracy can be measured along the three dimensions of 'breadth, depth and range' of mass participation in societal decisions, voting for representatives being only one aspect of participation in decision making.¹³ In this framework, Cuba is less of a democracy at one level than the United States (eg lack of multiparty elections), but is a deeper democracy at other levels, measured by the breadth, depth and range of mass popular participation in decision making, and by a much more democratic socioeconomic order that contrasts sharply with the gross inequalities in power and wealth that characterise the United States and the vast majority of 'democratic' states in Latin America and the Third World. Although Cuba falls short of the model of popular democracy in many respects—the subordination of civil society to the state, a weak development of mechanisms in which state officials are held directly accountable to mass constituencies, a lack of multiparty pluralism, and so forth—the point here is that it is not particularly meaningful, either theoretically or in any practical sense, to judge democracy or the lack of it in Cuba by the polyarchic conception applied by the United States.

The implications of substituting the literal (or classic) definition of democracy with the institutional definition embodied in polyarchy are vast. It means that such issues as who controls the material and cultural resources of society, in whose interests is society organised, and so forth, become irrelevant to the discussion of democracy. What is relevant is simply political contestation among elite factions through procedurally free elections, no more no less. It means that asymmetries and inequalities both among groups within a single nation and among nations within the international order bear no relation to democracy. The notion that there may be a veritable contradiction in terms between elite or class

rule, in which wealth and power is monopolised by tiny minorities, on the one hand, and democracy, on the other hand—a contradiction which would flow from the original Greek definition of power of the people—does not enter—by theoretical-definitional fiat—into the polyarchic definition, rooted in the pluralist model of power and structural-functionalist theory.

It should be clear that popular democracy, including mass participation, social justice, economic equalities and national sovereignty, challenges an unjust international social and economic order, and is a threat to US interests. Behind contested concepts are *contested social orders*. Popular democracy is antithetical to the 'low-intensity democracy' which the USA seeks to promote. Popular democracy threatens elite status quos and US/Northern domination. In Haiti, in Chile, in the Philippines, in South Africa and elsewhere, people have been struggling to replace dictatorships—sustained by strategic alliances between local elites and the USA—with emancipatory projects along the lines of the model of popular democracy. In crucial moments in these struggles, Washington stepped in, through various forms of democracy promotion programmes, to seek polyarchic outcomes. And in Nicaragua under the Sandinistas and Haiti under Aristide, democracy promotion and other forms of US intervention sought to effect transitions from experiments in popular democracy (regardless of the deficiencies and weaknesses internal to these experiments) to elite-based polyarchies.¹⁴ I will argue below that US policy towards Cuba seeks a similar outcome.

Globalisation, promoting polyarchy, and consensual domination in the 'new world order'

Struggles for popular democracy around the world are profound threats to the privileges of US-led Northern elites and their junior counterparts in the South. (I view the USA, in the age of globalisation, not as acting on behalf of a US elite, but as playing a leadership role on behalf of a transnational hegemonic configuration representing transnational capital; however, such a discussion is beyond the scope of this article.) Yet the methods and policies pursued during the Cold War years to confront these challenges have proved increasingly ineffective and untenable. This process has led US policy makers to initiate a shift in the dominant form through which the USA seeks to assure stability in a world system under Northern elite hegemony, from promoting authoritarian to promoting 'democratic' political and social arrangements in Third World countries. Both polyarchy and authoritarianism/dictatorship, as distinct forms of elite rule and social control, stand opposed to popular democracy. The shift in US foreign policy from promoting authoritarianism to promoting polyarchy is a shift from coercive to consensual methods of social control in the South, intended to address the post-World War II crises of elite rule. This assertion requires an expansion of the theoretical discussion.

The defining features of our epoch, which frames the shift from authoritarianism to polyarchy, is the emergence of a capitalist global economy. The emergence of a global economy brings with it the material basis for the emergence of a singular global society, including the transnationalisation of civil

society and of political processes. The old units of analysis—nation states—are increasingly inappropriate for understanding the dynamics of our epoch, not only in terms of economic processes, but also social relations and political systems. Promoting democracy can only be understood as part of a broader process of the exercise of hegemony, in the sense meant by Antonio Gramsci, within and between nations in the context of the transnationalisation of the economy, political processes and civil societies. 'Low intensity democracy' is a structural feature of the new world order: it is a global political system corresponding to a global economy under the hegemony of a transnational elite which is the agent of transnational capital. The shift from authoritarian to consensual mechanisms of social control corresponds to the emergence of the global economy since the 1970s and constitutes a political exigency of macroeconomic restructuring on a world scale.

The global economy has been well-researched and a discussion is beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to point out here that over the past several decades the world has been moving from a situation in which nations have been linked via capital flows and exchange in an integrated international market to the globalisation of the process of production itself. This involves the restructuring of the international division of labour and the reorganisation of productive structures in each nation, and has major consequences for the social and political texture of each society. As Cuba has discovered, no single nation state can remain insulated from the global capitalist economy or prevent the penetration of the social, political and cultural superstructure of global capitalism. Globalisation, made possible by several post-World War II waves in the 'scientific and technological revolution', is transforming the very nature of the industrial production process and, along with it, the role of human labour. It has allowed for the decentralisation across the globe of complex production processes simultaneous to the centralisation of decision making and management of global production, that is, the complete separation of the site of management from the site of production and the geographic fragmentation of production and capital. Capital now has the means to move with total mobility across the globe in the search for the cheapest labour and the most congenial conditions for the different circuits in the process of production and distribution, without regard for national borders. In this reorganised world economy, the rich countries of the North are increasingly based on control of technology, information and services in a 'global factory', whereas the labour-intensive phase of international production is shifted to the South through the 'comparative advantage' of abundant cheap labour. The globalisation of production, which involves a hitherto unseen integration of national economies, brings with it a tendency towards uniformity, not just in the conditions of production, but in the civil and political superstructure in which social relations of production unfold. The agent of the global economy is transnational capital, managed by a class-conscious transnational elite based in the 'centre' countries of the world system, and led by the USA.

The accelerated concentration of capital and economic power around this transnational elite in centre countries has profound effects on arrangements between existing social groups, class constellations and political systems in every country of the world system, including a redistribution of quotas of

accumulated political and economic power towards new groups linked to transnational capital and the global economy. In every region of the world, from Eastern Europe to Latin America, states, economies and political processes are becoming transnationalised and integrated under the guidance of this new elite. This transnational elite has its exact counterpart in each nation of the South, in a new breed of 'technocratic' elite in Latin America, Africa and Asia who are the local counterparts to the global elite, and who are overseeing sweeping processes of social and economic restructuring.¹⁵

This transnational elite has an economic project and a political counterpart to that project. The economic project is 'neoliberalism', a model which seeks to achieve conditions which permit the total mobility of capital. This model includes the elimination of state intervention in the economy and the regulation by individual nation-states over the activities of capital in their territories. The neoliberal 'structural adjustment' programmes currently sweeping the South seek macroeconomic stability (price and exchange-rate stability, etc) as an essential requisite for the activity of transnational capital, which must harmonise a wide range of fiscal, monetary and industrial policies among multiple nations if it is to be able to function simultaneously, and often instantaneously, between numerous national borders. In turn, the political project of this transnational elite is the consolidation of political systems which function through consensual mechanisms of social control, that is of polyarchic political systems. It is precisely these new elites in the South who have entered into alliances to promote democracy, or to develop democratic consensual forms of social control in their countries in contrast to the earlier forms of authoritarian or dictatorial control. It is in this context that democracy promotion and the promotion of free markets through neoliberal restructuring has become a singular process in US foreign policy. The US Agency for International Development (USAID) explains that promoting democracy in the latter part of the 20th century 'is complementary to and supportive of the transition to market-oriented economies'.¹⁶

But why consensual over coercive mechanisms of control? Authoritarianism and dictatorship had become a fetter to the emergent patterns of international capital accumulation corresponding to the global economy. Globalising forces have been disintegrating previously embedded forms of political authority. Transnational capital has become sufficiently disruptive and intrusive as to break down all the old barriers that separated and compartmentalised groups in and between societies, while mass communications is integrating what were once secluded social and cultural experiences of different peoples within the world system. The communications revolution has penetrated even the most remote and isolated regions of the world and linked them with an increasingly global civilisation. The globalisation of social life has brought with it new social movements and revolutions in civil society around the world. In short, people have been pushed by the global economy into new roles as economic and social protagonists, and in this process, have been demanding the democratisation of social life.

This is what the Trilateral Commission, in its landmark 1975 report *The Crisis of Democracy*, referred to as 'the explosion of social interaction, and correlatedly a tremendous increase of social pressure'. Social and economic developments in

the world over the past several decades 'have made it possible for a great many more groups and interests to coalesce ... the information explosion has made it difficult if not impossible to maintain the traditional distance that was deemed necessary to govern'. The report went on to note that the 'democracy ethos make it difficult to prevent access and restrict information, while the persistence of the bureaucratic processes which have been associated with the traditional governing systems makes it impossible to handle them at a low enough level'.¹⁷

In other words, authoritarian political systems are unable to manage the expansive social intercourse and fluid social relations associated with the global economy. Social interaction and economic integration on a world scale are obstructed by the political framework of authoritarian or dictatorial arrangements; under the hegemony of transnational capital, they require *consensual* arrangements. The imperative for democracy as far as elite interests are concerned, lies in the view that democracy is the most effective means of assuring stability. The interest is not democracy, but stability, the former seen as but a mechanism for the latter. This is in contrast to earlier periods in US foreign policy history—and correlatedly, to the historic norm in centre-periphery relations predicated on coercive modes of domination, as in the colonial era—when military dictatorships or authoritarian client regimes were seen as the best guarantor of stability.

The extremes of military regimes and highly unpopular dictatorships, like those of Somoza in Nicaragua, the Shah in Iran, Marcos in the Philippines, the Duvaliers in Haiti and Pinochet in Chile, engendered mass opposition movements that became transnational in their significance as globalisation proceeded, that threatened to lead to more fundamental social, economic and political changes and that were no longer guarantors of social control. Thus the challenge in promoting polyarchy is to remove dictatorships *and* pre-empt more fundamental changes. The Iranian revolution, followed shortly afterwards by the Nicaraguan in July 1979, were compelling events that brought home this lesson to US policy makers. Polyarchy is seen as the preferred means of confronting, or at least controlling, popular sectors and their demands—or as Kennan would say, their 'envy' and 'resentment'—in the framework of an unjust world system. Supported upon the foundations of what Gramsci referred to as ideological hegemony, consensual arrangements are at play for the resolution of conflicts *within the parameters of a given social order*. On the one hand, says Gershman, 'traditional autocrats simply cannot adapt to the pace of change and conflicting political pressures of the modern world'. On the other is 'the declining utility of conventional military force in the contemporary world'. In this context, 'competition is likely to continue to shift from the military to the political realm, and it will become increasingly important for the West to develop a sophisticated and long-term strategy for democratic political assistance'.¹⁸ *Formal* democratic structures are therefore seen as more disposed to diffusing the sharpest social tensions and to incorporating sufficient social bases with which to sustain more stable environments under the conflict-ridden and fluid conditions of emergent global society. This new political intervention is more sophisticated than earlier forms of intervention by the USA and other former colonial powers. The process tends to be less a crude design hatched in Washington and other Northern

capitals than a complex convergence of interests among an increasingly cohesive transnational elite headed by a US-led Northern bloc and incorporating elite constituencies in the South. The demands, grievances and aspirations of the popular classes tend to become neutralised or redirected less through direct repression than through ideological mechanisms, political cooptation and the limits imposed by the global economy and the legitimising parameters of polyarchy.

The distinction between authoritarianism and polyarchy should not be belittled, either in a normative or a theoretical sense. However, the trappings of democratic procedure in a polyarchic political system do not mean that the lives of those in nations where the USA is promoting democracy become filled with authentic or meaningful democratic content, much less that social justice or greater economic equality is achieved. Seen in the light of popular democracy, US democracy and democratisation, have nothing to do with meeting the authentic aspirations of repressed and marginalised majorities for political participation and for greater socioeconomic justice. But polyarchy may prove to be a more durable means of social control. US democracy promotion, as it actually functions, sets about not just to secure and stabilise polyarchy but to have the USA and local elites thoroughly penetrate not just the state, but civil society as the locus of a Gramscian hegemony, and *from therein* assure control over popular mobilisation and mass movements. In other words, seen through the lens of the promotion of polyarchy, the composition and balance of power in civil society in a given Third World country is now just as important to US interests as who controls the governments of those countries. This is a shift from social control 'from above' to social control 'from below' (and within), for the purpose of managing change and reform so as to pre-empt any elemental challenge to the social order. This explains why the new political intervention, conducted by the NED and other agencies, does not target governments *per se*, but groups in civil society itself—trade unions, political parties, the mass media, professional guilds, peasant associations, women's, youth, student and other mass organisations.

The introduction of 'political aid'

The policy shift from promoting authoritarianism to promoting polyarchy has been a lengthy process drawn out over several decades. In addition, it involved the development of new modalities, instruments and agencies for actually accomplishing the transition, from authoritarian to polyarchic political and social systems in third world countries where intervention had taken place. This reorientation entailed, in particular, the introduction and expansion of an underdeveloped and underutilised instrument in US foreign policy, *political aid*, which has come to supplement the two main tools of US foreign policy since World War II, military and economic aid programmes.

'Programs to strengthen friendly political movements in other countries are one of the foreign policy arms of a modern great power', noted two participants in Project Democracy, a semi-secret programme launched in the early 1980s under the auspices of the NSC to develop democracy promotion programmes.¹⁹

'Until this century, there were three instruments for such efforts: diplomacy, economic, and military. This triad retains its primacy today, but it has been supplemented by two additional instruments,' they explained. 'One is propaganda ... The other new policy instrument—aid to friendly political organizations abroad ... helps build up political actors in other polities, rather than merely seeking to influence existing ones.'²⁰

Between World War II and 1990, the USA spent some \$400 billion in such foreign military and economic 'aid' (over a trillion dollars at 1990 dollars).²¹ The purpose of military aid was to bolster local repressive forces which could suppress dissent and maintain social control. US economic aid programmes, beyond gaining political influence, were intended to integrate the economies of recipient countries into the world capitalist market.²² The policy shift has not in the least bit eclipsed the two traditional foreign policy instruments; to the contrary, they have been refurbished and widely deployed. However, the key ingredient was still missing. It was the introduction of this third category which would play a centripetal role in facilitating the shift in policy.

Those arguing for the introduction of political aid, including a commission supervised by the NSC under Project Democracy to create the NED, made broad reference to the conclusions of a 1972 book by William A Douglas, *Developing Democracy*.²³ In his study, Douglas reviewed the debates in US intellectual and policy-making circles over whether authoritarianism or 'democracy' is best suited to meeting US interests. Douglas coined the term *regimented democracy* to describe the type of political system the US should promote in place of authoritarianism.²⁴ Comparing the populations of developing nations with 'children', and calling underdevelopment a result of their 'traditional attitudes', Douglas argued that the peoples of the Third World required 'tutelage', 'regimentation' and 'social control', but that 'democracy' could achieve these goals more effectively than authoritarianism. 'That a firm hand is needed is undeniable', but 'democracy can provide a sufficient degree of regimentation, if it can build up the mass organizations needed to reach the bulk of the people on a daily basis. Dictatorship has no monopoly on the tutelage principle.'²⁵ Douglas went on to develop detailed recommendations on how 'political aid' programmes should be introduced. Just as economic aid addressed economic underdevelopment, reasoned Douglas, political aid 'should address political underdevelopment'.²⁶ He emphasised: 'We should undertake an active policy of political aid, for both developmental and security reasons'.²⁷

The trick, said Douglas, was to devise the correct 'transplanting mechanisms' for establishing polyarchy in the Third World.²⁸ Included among the recommendations were the establishment of a specialised agency (later to become the NED); the participation of the private sector in democracy promotion abroad; and the modification of existing government institutions and programmes so as to synchronise overall foreign policy with 'political aid'. Two decades after his study, the 'transplanting mechanisms' and 'insulating devices' which Douglas called for became embodied in the new democracy promotion programmes. Douglas himself went on to become a senior consultant to the NSC's Project Democracy, which led to the creation of the NED. The operation and concrete mechanisms of democracy promotion operations in countries in

which the USA has intervened have been well-documented in a growing body of empirical studies.²⁹ The point here is that political aid, administered through the NED, USAID, and other channels, has become a sophisticated instrument for penetrating the political systems and civil society of other countries down to the grassroots level.

NED president Gershman has categorised US political intervention programmes into those aimed at 'long-term democratic political development', and those aimed at securing a 'democratic transition', that is, a change of regime.³⁰ The first category signifies programmes aimed at stabilising and consolidating polyarchic political systems in societies already considered 'democratic', by bolstering elite forces in political and civil society, and by inculcating what the operatives and theoreticians of the new political intervention consider to be the 'political culture' of polyarchy. Programmes under this category in the 1990s include most Latin American nations, as well as the former Soviet bloc countries, all of which were considered 'democratic'. In the second category, 'transitions to democracy', US policy makers identify two types of transitions: from authoritarian or right-wing dictatorships to elitist civilian regimes; and from left-wing, popular, nationalist or socialist regimes, considered adversaries, to elitist regimes allied with the US-led transnational elite. Chile, Haiti, Paraguay and the Philippines, fell under the first type in the 1980s and, in the 1990s, many African and several Asian nations fall under this type. Nicaragua fell under the second, as did Haiti under Aristide and as does Cuba at the moment.

The US challenge in Cuba: imposing a transition to capitalist polyarchy

The change in US policy towards Cuba, from an emphasis on external 'security' concerns to an internal 'democratisation' focus, is the combined product of the shift to democracy promotion and the end of the Cold War and US-Soviet competition. The US objective in Cuba since 1959, beneath and beyond real or perceived security concerns, has been to recover historic US domination over the country and to neutralise the threat that Cuba represented (a threat caused by Cuba's foreign policy practice and the revolutionary example it set, and thus a political as well as an ideological threat). This objective has not changed under the Bush or Clinton administrations. The destruction of the Cuban revolution will remain the US goal throughout the 1990s. In the early 1990s a remarkable, if largely unnoticed, consensus emerged in Washington across the mainstream political spectrum, from liberal to conservative, regarding a shift in Cuba policy towards democracy promotion. This consensus was expressed in a series of high-level policy reports, and has since been affirmed in actual policy.³¹ The following observations are presented, by way of conclusion, as a synopsis of the US democracy promotion strategy towards Cuba. However, it should be emphasised that Cuba is a special, enigmatic and exceptionally complex case.

The operationalising assumption in Washington is that the Cuban revolution can, and will, be undermined over the mid term, and that Washington stands a better chance than ever in the 1990s of reimposing its historic domination over the country (this distinguishes the current conjuncture from that of the late 1970s, when US and Cuban officials dabbled in negotiations over a real *modus*

vivendi). But this goal will be pursued in the context of the new policy of democracy promotion. The banners of anti-communist and national security have already been discarded. The new policy focus involves a shift from aggressive destabilisation from without to political penetration and cooptation from within, in which the target is as much Cuban civil society as it is the Cuban state. The undertaking will be largely along the lines of the 'Nicaragua model'. In that model, US objectives changed dramatically from 1987 onward, from an attempt to militarily overthrow the Sandinistas through an externally-based counterrevolutionary movement seeking an authoritarian restoration, to new forms of political intervention in support of an internal 'moderate' opposition. This opposition, organised and trained through large-scale US political aid programmes, operated through peaceful (non-coercive) means in civil society to undermine Sandinista hegemony. The shift from hard-line destabilisation to 'democracy promotion' in Nicaragua, culminating in the 1990 electoral defeat of the Sandinistas, a conservative restoration and the installation of a polyarchic political system, the reinsertion of Nicaragua into the global economy, and far-reaching neo-liberal restructuring, has been well-documented elsewhere.³²

US policy makers have acknowledged that a strategic weakness in their policy over the past 35 years has been an emphasis on hard-line destabilisation from abroad, without concern for establishing and stabilising any viable alternative to the revolution. In this sense, Washington is learning what revolutionaries have always argued: in order to overthrow a regime and install a new system, two factors must be met. First, the existing regime and its system must be in crisis (this is the approximate situation in Cuba). Second, a viable alternative must be in place, ready and capable of taking over and mounting a new system (this is the US challenge).

This shift implies an effort to transfer the nucleus of anti-Castro opposition forces from Miami to Cuba in order to ensure that the opposition becomes headquartered—physically and institutionally—inside Cuba. This shift also requires a greater flow of human, material and financial resources and communications between the United States and Cuba. It means transferring US support from the extreme-right political and paramilitary groups, such as the Cuban American National Foundation and Alpha 66, towards opposition groups considered moderate and centrist—and even leftist, by US standards. In this regard, the US strategy might lead to quiet negotiations on specific 'line-item' points, such as immigration and telephone lines. But such bargaining should not be confused with a US intention to negotiate a *modus vivendi*.

Promoting democracy in Cuba, to date, has involved large sums of political aid, mostly for Cuban groups located outside Cuba. These political aid programmes have been handled so far mostly by the NED, and have involved some \$20 million between 1986 and 1993.³³ The objective of these programmes is to create the 'in-country' agents of a transnational project for Cuba. Through the new modalities of political intervention it has developed, Washington has already begun to foment a national opposition network inside and outside Cuba, backed by a broad international support network, and including human rights groups, political parties, trade unions, communications media, youth and women's groups, civic associations and so forth, along the same lines as the

'Nicaragua model'. These political aid programmes would strive to provide this opposition network with a political action capacity and a public projection among the Cuban population. Such an opposition network would be interlocking in its leadership, sharing a common programme. It will not be a covert or violent opposition. Its public discourse will be moderate, even nationalist, and it will not call for the overthrow of the Cuban government but for dialogue, a political opening and peaceful change. It will raise sensitive issues among the Cuban population, emphasising the current economic hardships and the aspirations of Cuba's post-1959 youth generation. US strategists will attempt to cultivate a social base for political opposition among those within the Cuban population tied to the emergent external sector of the bifurcated economy, exploiting incipient internal social stratification, resentments and legitimate grievances. It should be noted in this regard that leadership and supporters of these opposition groups in Cuban civil society should *not* be depicted as mere puppets of US intervention, but as Cuban constituencies whose endogenous pursuits are incorporated through US policy into a larger strategy which manipulates problems and limitations stemming from objective conditions and from weaknesses internal to the Cuban revolution.

The tremendous constraints imposed on Cuba by the global capitalist economy makes more favourable the terrain on which the USA will pursue its objective. Irrespective of particular US policies, Cuba, like most other nations in the world, has little choice but to insert itself into the global capitalist economy under terms which are largely dictated from the principal Northern capitalist powers and their transnational economic and political instruments. The USA is playing the role of leadership in the emergence of a new transnational historic bloc, and Cuba's insertion into the 'brave new world' of global capitalism is thoroughly linked to US-Cuban relations.

In this regard, the economic embargo of Cuba is an essential ingredient in overall US policy. If it is lifted, it will be in exchange for such Cuban concessions as permitting the free flow of US support for internal groups. And it will probably not be lifted in the short, or even mid term.³⁴ The US strategy is to seek to arrest Cuba's efforts at reinsertion into the world economy and penetration of capitalist markets, so as to perpetuate economic attrition. The entire strategy rests on assuring the continuity of Cuba's severe economic crisis, at preventing recovery, since the underlying strategy is to convert an economic crisis into social discontent, and then to give a political expression to this discontent—that is, to foment a 'critical mass'. This is predicated on maintaining the embargo, while simultaneously achieving a 'demonstration effect' and a sense of 'relative deprivation' among the Cuban population through mass communications, image creation and symbolic manipulation.

The policy shift will help reduce the long-standing tactical differences over how to confront the Cuban revolution that have existed between the dominant groups in the USA, on the one hand, and the dominant groups in Western Europe and Latin America, on the other. The call for Washington's version of 'free and fair elections' will be ongoing. Nevertheless, the efforts to foment an internal political opposition will move forward with or without multiparty elections in Cuba. Washington will rely heavily on 'third-country' participation in its

policies. For instance, support for internal opposition groups will be channelled through other Latin American countries, and the call for 'free and fair elections' will be made through multilateral forums.

Despite the claim that it is only interested in process and not in outcome, the United States is actually interested, in Cuba and elsewhere, in outcome. In Nicaragua the 1984 elections were impeccably free and fair as regards process, but were rejected by Washington because of their outcome: a Sandinista electoral victory. In 1990, the elections were again impeccable in process, but this time the United States welcomed the process because it obtained its desired outcome: the removal of the Sandinistas from power. Similarly, we should not assume that US hostility would cease and relations normalise if Cuba were to hold elections tomorrow which were procedurally correct if the outcome were a ratification of the current government, since the United States is concerned with outcome in Cuba, not process.

Notes

This article is a modified version of a paper presented at the Conference on Democracy and the US–Cuban Dispute, held in Havana, Cuba, in April 1994 under the joint sponsorship of the Centro de Estudios sobre America (Havana) and CRIUS (Managua). William Robinson teaches Sociology at the University of New Mexico, and is author of *Promoting Polyarchy: Globalization and US Intervention*, and *Democracy in the 21st Century*, Cambridge University Press, forthcoming, 1996.

¹ Department of State, 'Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean: The Promise and the Challenge', Washington, DC: Bureau of Public Affairs, Department of State, Special Report No 158, March 1987, p 13.

² Policy Planning Study (PPS) 23, Department of State, dated 24 February 1948, in *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*, II(2), 1948, p 23.

³ 'Fostering democracy abroad: the role of the National Endowment for Democracy', speech delivered by Carl Gershman to the American Political Science Foundation Convention, 29 August 1986.

⁴ William I Robinson & Kent Norsworthy, *David and Goliath: The US War Against Nicaragua*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1987, p 15. For a good summary of CIA interventions and a chronology of US wars since the founding of the US republic, see William Blum, *The CIA: A Forgotten History*, London: Zed Press, 1986. For overall analysis and description of US foreign policy in the post war period, including the policy of promoting authoritarianism, see, among other works, Thomas J McCormick, *America's Half Century: United States Foreign Policy in the Cold War*, Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1989; and William Appleman Williams, *Empire as a Way of Life*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1980.

⁵ National Security Council Memorandum NSC-68, dated 7 April 1950, in *FRUS*, I, 1950, pp 252, 263, 272.

⁶ For a detailed analysis of the creation of the post-World War II order, see Laurence H Shoup & William Minter, *Imperial Brain Trust: The Council on Foreign Relations and United States Foreign Policy*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977.

⁷ For details on this 'democracy promotion' apparatus, see, among other studies, William I Robinson, *US Intervention in the Nicaraguan Elections and American Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era*, Boulder, CO: Westview, 1992, ch 1, 'The new intervention'; Tony Smith, *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994; Council on Hemispheric Affairs, *National Endowment for Democracy (NED): A Foreign Policy Branch Gone Awry*, Washington, DC, 1990; and General Accounting Office (GAO), *Promoting Democracy: Foreign Affairs and Defense Agencies Funds and Activities 1991 to 1993*, Washington, DC: GAO, 1994.

⁸ See Robert A Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1971. For Huntington's analysis, see Samuel Huntington, 'The modest meaning of democracy', in Robert A Pastor, *Democracy in the Americas: Stopping the Pendulum*, New York: Holmes and Meier, 1989.

⁹ See, eg, Robinson, *US Intervention in the Nicaraguan Elections*, ch 8, 'The future: low intensity democracy?'; and Barry Gills, Joel Rocamora & Richard Wilson (eds), *Low Intensity Democracy: Political Power in the New World Order*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993.

¹⁰ W B Gallie, 'Essentially contested concepts', *Aristotelian Society*, 56, 1956, pp 167–198.

¹¹ A full listing of literature referring to popular democracy is impossible here. Antonio Gramsci and Rosa Luxemburg would be the classical thinkers in the Marxist tradition on democracy. For general discussions which contrast polyarchy (referred to as 'liberal democracy') and popular democracy, see, among other

- works, David Held, *Political Theory and the Modern State: Essays on State, Power, and Democracy*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1989; and David Held & Christopher Pollitt (eds), *New Forms of Democracy*, London: Sage Publications, 1986.
- ¹² Larry Diamond, Juan J Linz & Seymour Martin Lipset (eds), *Democracy in Developing Countries*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner and the National Endowment for Democracy, p xvi.
- ¹³ Carl Cohen, *Democracy*, New York: The Free Press, 1971.
- ¹⁴ For Nicaragua, see Robinson, *US Intervention in the Nicaraguan Elections*. For Haiti, see, among others, Paul Farmer, *The Uses of Haiti*, Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 1994; James Ridgeway (ed), *The Haiti Files: Decoding the Crisis*, Washington, DC: Azul Editions, 1994; and Worth Cooley-Prost, *Democracy Intervention in Haiti: The USAID Democracy Enhancement Project*, Washington, DC: Washington Office on Haiti, 1994.
- ¹⁵ William Robinson, 'The Sao Paulo Forum: is there a new Latin American left?', *Monthly Review*, 44, 1992, pp 1-12.
- ¹⁶ 'The democratic initiative', Washington, DC: US Agency for International Development, Department of State, December 1990.
- ¹⁷ Michel Crozier, Samuel P Huntington & Joji Watanuki, *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission*, (New York: New York University Press, 1975, p 13.
- ¹⁸ Carl Gershman, 'The United States and the world democratic revolution', *The Washington Quarterly*, Winter 1989.
- ¹⁹ There has been much written on Project Democracy and the origins of the NED. See, for instance, Council on Hemispheric Affairs, *National Endowment for Democracy*; Robinson, *US Intervention in the Nicaraguan Elections*; and Holly Sklar & Chip Berlet, 'NED, CIA, and the Orwellian Democracy Project', *Covert Action Information Bulletin*, 39, Winter 1991-92.
- ²⁰ Michael A Samuels & William A Douglas, 'Promoting democracy', in *Washington Quarterly*, Summer 1981, pp 52-53. Samuels and Douglas were Project Democracy consultants.
- ²¹ See Doug Bandow, 'Economic and military aid', in Peter J Shraeder (ed), *Intervention in the 1980s: US Foreign Policy in the Third World*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1989, p 63. Note that if US aid channelled through multilateral agencies is included, the figure nearly doubles.
- ²² NSC-68 described economic aid as 'a major instrument in the conduct of United States foreign relations. It is an instrument which can powerfully influence the world environment in ways favorable to US interests. National Security Council Memorandum NSC-68, dated 7 April, 1950, in *FRUS*, I, 1950, p 258.
- ²³ William A Douglas, *Developing Democracy*. Washington, DC: Heldref Publications, 1972.
- ²⁴ *Ibid*, p 122-123.
- ²⁵ *Ibid*, p 16-22.
- ²⁶ *Ibid*, p 16.
- ²⁷ *Ibid*, p xiii.
- ²⁸ *Ibid*, p 43.
- ²⁹ Among numerous works which document US democracy promotion programmes in diverse countries in Latin America, Africa, Asia, the Middle East and countries of Eastern and Southern Europe, see Robinson, *US Intervention in the Nicaraguan Elections*; Sklar & Berlet, 'NED, CIA'; Farmer, *The Uses of Haiti*; Cooley-Prost, *Democracy Intervention in Haiti*; Council on Hemispheric Affairs, *National Endowment for Democracy*; and Beth Sims, *Workers of the World Undermined*, Boston, MD: South End Press, 1993.
- ³⁰ Gershman, 'The United States and the world democratic revolution'.
- ³¹ Three such highly influential reports were 'Cuba in the Americas: reciprocal challenges', issued by the liberal Inter-American Dialogue (Washington, DC, October 1992), 'Hastening Castro's downfall', issued by the conservative Heritage Foundation (Washington, DC, 2 July 1992), and a 'non-partisan' RAND report, 'Cuba adrift in a postcommunist world', prepared for the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy (by RAND analysts Edward Gonzalez & David Ronfeld, RAND, Santa Monica, CA: 1992). Several members of the Inter-American Dialogue, including President Richard E Feinberg, went on to occupy positions concerning Latin America policy in the Clinton Administration State Department and National Security Council.
- ³² Robinson, *US Intervention in the Nicaraguan Elections*. Also see Angel Saldomando, *El Retorno de la AIN, Caso de Nicaragua: Condicionalidad y Reestructuración Conservadora*, Managua: Ediciones CRIES, 1992.
- ³³ See National Endowment for Democracy, Annual Reports, 1986-1993 (Washington, DC). For discussion, see also The Inter-Hemispheric Education Resource Center, 'Turning the screws on Cuba', *The NED Backgrounder*, 1(3) 1992; and Jack Colhoun, 'Washington goes shopping for Cuban "democracy"', *Guardian*, 25 December 1991, p 7.
- ³⁴ The three policy reports mentioned above all coincided in calling for such a selective lifting of the embargo. This position was reiterated in a September 1994 follow-up RAND report by Edward Gonzalez & David Ronfeldt, *Storm Warnings for Cuba* (RAND Corporation, Santa Monica), and has been followed in the US-Cuban negotiations that have taken place, on an on-again, off-again basis since 1993 over various bilateral issues.

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North Korean-US nuclear rapprochement: the South Korean dilemma

TAEWOO KIM

To some South Koreans, the whole process of the US-Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) nuclear rapprochement, culminating in the 1994 Geneva agreement and the 1995 light water reactor deal, has been a collection of bad dreams—US inattention and vacillation, superpower double diplomacy, ally-adversary bed-sharing, double betrothal, officiator-bride elopement, dilution of traditional alliances, subservience of South Korean diplomacy, sponsoring of somebody else's festival, DPRK diplomatic adroitness, Chinese hegemonic arrogance, etc, in none of which could South Korea play any other than an antihero's role.

Upon the the US-DPRK Geneva accord on 21 October, 1994, South Korean nationalists did not hesitate to point out that the North Koreans had won both 'perks' and 'pork' from the Geneva nuclear talks, overwhelming their US partners in many important respects. Unlike the US government, relieved by the conclusion of its 16-month-long nuclear talks, prompted when Pyongyang declared on 12 March 1993 that it would withdraw from the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT); and unlike the Seoul government, which is always quick to welcome any US decision in the name of Republic of Korea (ROK)-US collaboration, nationalists were shocked at the success of North Korean nuclear diplomacy, for it had scored a resounding triumph. They soon became annoyed about the short-term pitfalls caused by the US-DPRK nuclear rapprochement and about the serious nuclear dilemmas South Korea had always had to live with.

Perks and pork for North Korea

Through the Geneva accord North Korea promised to stay within the NPT framework, to accommodate the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, to freeze construction of its 50 MW and 200 MW graphite-moderated reactors, and to freeze operation of the controversial 5 MW reactor and reprocessing plant which it euphemistically termed a 'radio-chemical laboratory'. This of course includes a promise not to reprocess the spent fuel removed from the 5 MW reactor. Pyongyang also agreed to 'take steps to implement the Inter-Korean Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean peninsula'¹ and to 'engage in inter-Korean Dialogue'.

In exchange, the USA promised to provide a formal assurance to the DPRK that it would not threaten or use nuclear weapons against it, to construct, via an

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international consortium, a 2000 MW light water reactor (LWR) in North Korea by 2003, to supply North Korea with 500,000 tons of heavy oil annually, to reduce barriers to trade and investment and to open liaison offices in each other's capitals. Washington also agreed to conclude a bilateral agreement on cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy should that become necessary. Right after the Geneva accord South Korea agreed to the US request that it bear most of the LWR expenses, on condition that it play a central role in building and providing South Korean-standard LWRs to North Korea. The international consortium, Korea Energy Development Organization (KEDO) was established on 9 March 1995 and the LWR project is now underway—at least seemingly—as North Korea finally stopped protesting at Seoul's offer to provide South Korean-model reactors and agreed on 13 June 1995 on 'South Korea's central role' in building and providing its LWRs.

When completed, the \$4 billion-worth LWRs will provide North Korea with enhanced efficiency in electricity production and help alleviate its long-term electricity needs, which the weapons-production orientated graphite moderated reactors cannot. This is more than just a stop for its moribund economy. In addition, the nuclear rapprochement with Washington has given Pyongyang an opportunity to free itself from diplomatic isolation and cast off its longstanding rogue status, while opening a road towards cross-recognition and economic assistance from the Western countries. Pyongyang has also been triumphant in inter-Korean diplomatic competition by successfully excluding South Korea from the nuclear negotiations. Yet Pyongyang has done no more than merely commit to the nuclear transparency that most other non-nuclear signatories of the NPT have long embraced. A glimpse of the process of the US-DPRK nuclear deals suffices to demonstrate that North Korea came out with both political perks and economic pork.

Internationalism and nationalism

In South Korea 'liberals' are generally deemed to be those who are relatively sympathetic towards Pyongyang, and racial homogeneity is often the starting rationale of their policy recommendations. They usually propose inter-Korean exchanges, play down the North Korean nuclear threat and unanimously oppose any sanctions against the DPRK. 'Conservatives' are those with a deep-rooted ideological animosity against North Korea, who never underestimate the security threat from the north; the East-West confrontational structure still encrusted across the belly of the Korean peninsula has been their starting rationale.

The liberal-conservative dichotomy, however, does not suffice to explain the nuclear debate in South Korea, as the schools of opinions are also divided into 'internationalists' who seek a nuclear solution within the framework of international cooperation and 'nationalists' who assess any nuclear prescriptions by the criterion of national interest. While the decision-making of the Seoul government is dominated by *soi-disant* internationalist bureaucrats, the term 'internationalism', has, however, been purposely misleading in South Korea.

A scrupulous analyst cannot fail to note that, for the internationalist bureaucrats, the ROK-US collaboration has been the be all and end all both

of solving the North Korean nuclear problem and of the survival of the nation. Their policies, accordingly, have fluctuated, tied to vacillations in US policy, rather than to international events. It is the internationalist bureaucrats who take a tough position *vis-à-vis* Pyongyang whenever the USA threatens the DPRK. So although they lack an ideological conviction, they are mistakenly called hard-liners. It is they who welcome US policy initiatives towards North Korea, whether tough or soft, and they are often criticized by the South Korean public for inconsistency. For too long their pro-Americanism has been so conveniently cloaked with the vague term 'internationalism' that they can effectively shun the domestic charge of being diplomatically dependent on the USA. It is no wonder that the self-styled internationalists may be called either conservatives or liberals according to US vacillation.

What is important is that conservative-nationalists have aggrandised their persuasiveness silently but steadily even while parochial analysts and commentators continue predominantly to use the misleading liberal-conservative dichotomy. These nationalists are conservative in principle, in the sense that they advocate watertight security *vis-à-vis* North Korea and never dismiss the critical importance of the ROK-US alliance as a security pillar. They are nationalists in that they are ready to resist US policy if it undermines South Korea's critical national interests such as short-term security or long-term unification. They want an unfettered unification policy while desiring to respond to the North Korean strategic threat with means as independent as possible, which they believe will provide a strong foundation for a unified Korea. It is therefore important to assess the nature of the US-initiated non-proliferation framework imposed upon South Korea as well as the problems caused by the US-DPRK nuclear rapprochement from the South Korean nationalist point of view.

South Korea's nuclear vulnerability exposed

First of all, the US-DPRK nuclear rapprochement ignores North Korea's previous nuclear activities. The Geneva accord specifies that the DPRK will come into full compliance with its safeguards agreement with the IAEA (INF-CIRC/403) before 'delivery of key nuclear components', which will take place four to five years after the beginning of the LWK project. This simply means that Pyongyang can go for that period without special inspections, the key to illuminating Pyongyang's past nuclear activities. To South Korean critics, an inspection with years of prior notification is nothing but a political show and South Korean vulnerability to the nuclear devices Pyongyang had already made—bombs-in-the-basement, bombs ready to be assembled, hidden plutonium, or whatever—is not dealt with.

From the moment the North Korean nuclear problem arose, Pyongyang's actual motives have been the primary dilemma for Seoul. For South Korea, the fact that the Stalinist regime could be deceiving the inspectors, as did Iraq, and be developing nuclear weapons secretly on Seoul's very doorstep poses appalling dangers. The Geneva accord fell short of lessening South Korea's nuclear insecurity and Seoul may have to live until unification with the possibility of diplomatic harassment by a North Korean version of the NCND (neither confirm

nor deny) policy. Though liberals may argue that undeliverable bombs, if any, with untested triggering systems and unknown reliability hardly pose a problem, what South Korean nationalists worry about is much more complex.

To them, South Korea's insecurity dilemma is structural. They readily point to the nuclear North-South structure between the US and the Korean peninsula,² under which the former wants to strip both Koreas of any kind of nuclear potential. They find the gap in strategic capability between North and South Korea inevitable as long as the Pyongyang regime effectively evades or delays US non-proliferation endeavours, while the internationalists continue to toe the US non-proliferation line, forfeiting the means to respond to North Korea in kind.

For the South Korean nationalists, there is no other choice but to painfully recognise the nuclear 'haves vs have-nots' politics, intermingled with the conventional ROK-US alliance, which leaves their nation no nuclear option *vis-à-vis* North Korea. There is no other choice but to marvel at the pertinacity of Pyongyang's nuclear diplomacy that has successfully bickered and muddled its way through to the extent that a North Korean version of the strategy of ambiguity may indeed become credible—even on top of its having grabbed political and economic gains. Without the means to make itself heard and felt, South Korea will have to depend even more heavily upon the USA, should Pyongyang substantiate a southward nuclear threat.

Holes in the US nuclear umbrella

To South Korean conservative-nationalists, the US-North Korea nuclear deals, particularly the signing of the Geneva accord without inquiring into Pyongyang's past nuclear activities, was a disgraceful superpower concession to a communist evil as well as a thoughtless mistreatment of the ROK-US alliance. By the Geneva accord the USA will have to 'provide formal assurance to the DPRK against the threat or use of nuclear weapons by the US'. Such assurance, if provided, will be the first negative security assurance (NSA), given to an individual non-nuclear state. What is really devastating to South Korea is the fact that such an NSA will contradict the US security commitment given to Seoul, of which the nuclear umbrella is a part: promising both non-use of nuclear weapons to one party and nuclear protection to the other is no less contradictory than a man promising to marry two different women. Of course, such a theoretical contradiction could be mitigated by attaching a proviso. No one considers the US non-use promise to the DPRK as valid, or anyway as intense, as its protection commitment to its South Korean ally. The contradiction, nevertheless, is conspicuous enough to give South Koreans a real fright, impelling them to be increasingly sceptical of the security of the ROK-US alliance, in addition to making the pro-American internationalists uneasy.

In this regard, the secrecy of the US-DPRK negotiations will continue to be felt rather painfully, particularly by the South Korean nationalists. It is believed that through the process of nuclear rapprochement the two nations have secretly discussed and agreed upon, whether tentatively or not, much more than what was disclosed to the public. Even right after the Geneva accord details on how and

when the reprocessing facilities would be dismantled or special inspections scheduled were not known to South Korea. South Koreans are anxious to know whether their traditional ally reached a behind-the-scenes agreement with their adversary over a schedule for normalisation of diplomatic relations or conclusion of a mutual atomic cooperation agreement.

Some nationalists, while warning against sudden dilution of US-South Korea security relations, even argue that the two nations may have exchanged substantive ideas for the future fate of the US forces in South Korea. To them, conclusion of a US-DPRK atomic cooperation agreement may herald the demise of the 'two-to-one' structure in which the US-South Korea alliance confronts the communist regime, thus signalling the beginning of a 'one-to-two' structure in which the US counterbalances the two Koreas against each other.

Leaving aside the validity of the unproven scenarios the nationalists worry about, it is a tribulation as well as a dilemma for South Korea to see secretive ally-adversary bargaining decide its own vital interests.

Pitfalls in the LWR project

South Korean liberals believe that the LWR project will facilitate inter-Korean personnel exchanges and the opening up of North Korea, and that the South Korean share of the cost, expected to amount to some \$4 billion, should be assumed as a part of unification costs. Perhaps so. Optimists also believe that 'South Korea's central role' in building and providing the LWRs to North Korea is now guaranteed because the USA and North Korea agreed on June 1995 13 that KEDO would decide the reactor type and KEDO had decided that it would be built by the Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO). But the LWR project was a product of nuclear negotiation between the USA and North Korea in the course of working for their own national interests, not of inter-Korean dialogue in which South Korea is a legitimate party. For the USA, bent on extension of the NPT, the need to silence North Korean nuclear controversy was urgent, while North Korea was seeking an economic and political *quid pro quo*. For this and other reasons the LWR project still leaves many questions unanswered.

Will 'South Korea's central role' be specified in the North Korea-KEDO main contract, and if so, how? Will North Korea accept it as agreed with the USA? How Korean will the reactors be? Will not KEPCO allow US programme coordinators to design and produce the key parts of the reactors? These have been South Korea's legitimate misgivings, for North Korea had rejected the South Korean model while the USA shuttled between Seoul and Pyongyang to persuade each side to step down. What if North Korea abruptly decides to stop the LWR project and expel South Korean personnel? How can South Korea be protected against pecuniary losses stemming from a North Korean breach? These questions are not without foundation, given Pyongyang's impassioned rejection of the South Korean model during negotiations with the USA and its unchanged 'omit South Korea' strategy.

The idea of providing substantial atomic cooperation to an ungrateful DPRK would be like sponsoring somebody else's festival, particularly to many South

Koreans. If something goes wrong in South Korea's central role, the Seoul government may have to suspend the LWR project before it is too late. So far all that is certain is that South Korea is expected to put up the lion's share of the project costs with only a vague hope that it will help unification, but without knowing whether Seoul can keep diplomatic leverage commensurate with what it pays. What has been sketched out so far renders South Korea a magnanimous pushover in a rough and bumpy business.

Denuclearisation declaration with no *raison d'être*

A careless analyst may easily fail to notice that the inter-Korean Joint Declaration on the Denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula has twice been killed, once by Pyongyang and once by the US-DPRK nuclear negotiation. The document was killed for the first time when North Korea signed it but decided to keep the plutonium it had produced secretly, despite Article III of the Declaration that prohibits possession of enrichment and reprocessing facilities by either Korea. Then South Korean nationalists asked: 'Why should we abide by Article III when the other side completely ignores it?'

A conscientious analyst, however, can easily accept that the answer should be sought from the dynamics of the nuclear 'haves-vs-have-nots' politics between the USA and South Korea, though it is not easily discernible because it is intertwined with East-West relations. The truth is that on the one hand the two nations have cooperated within the framework of Article III to preventing the communist regime acquiring a nuclear weapons capability. On the other hand the champion of the nuclear haves has effectively hampered the any similar move by a nuclear have-not—South Korea—within the same framework. Of course, neither Seoul's internationalist government nor the Clinton Administration can be expected to address this injustice.

The Declaration was killed again when the USA and the DPRK signed the Geneva accord on 21 October 1994, since most of what they agreed upon—basic nuclear transparency, closure of the radio-chemical laboratory, reopening of the inter-Korean dialogue, etc—should have been implemented by the inter-Korean Declaration. Once again the Declaration proved to be non-binding on North Korea. Undoubtedly, major nuclear matters in North Korea will continue to be decided by its negotiation with the USA, rather than with South Korea or by the Declaration. To the Seoul government, how to recover a *raison d'être* for the Declaration remains a difficult dilemma.

Other turnarounds

There are other reasons why the US-DPRK nuclear deal is not just an end in itself. It is possible that North Korea will choose stormy nuclear relations with the outside world for some domestic reason. Discrepancies in technical opinions over treatment of spent fuel, closure of the graphite-moderated reactors and the radio-chemical laboratory, or over implementation of the LWR construction, may become sources of misfortune at any time. Among other things, the USA and

South Korea will have to prepare guidelines on how to react in the event of a premeditated breach by North Korea of what has been agreed upon.

Under one scenario the Republicans in the US Congress may compel the Clinton Administration to unsheath a military sword since the most urgent business, NPT extension, has been completed in May 1995. Then South Korea would be forced into another perilous situation. South Korean liberals have argued, as vociferously as Bruce Cummings does,³ that the idea of taking out the North Korean nuclear capability by a surgical strike is absolutely monstrous. For conservatives the issue of US military sanctions is another divergence point that unequivocally differentiates nationalists from internationalist bureaucrats. Unlike the pro-American bureaucrats who side with the Cold War warriors whenever Washington signals the possibility of military sanctions, nationalists steadily and vigorously oppose such an extreme action for different reasons: such a military strike would be destructive not only to the North but to South Korea, and would dash the unification dream. A pre-emptive US military strike against North Korean nuclear facilities could spew radioactivity over the peninsula and would demand a tremendous political sacrifice on the part of South Korea, not to mention the possibility of North Korean retaliation against the South or even an all-out war.⁴ Such a measure is probably far down the list of likely US actions. Nevertheless, South Koreans can justifiably be nervous.

Turnarounds in international nuclear politics related to the NPT extension could also be an intervening variable to jolt the whole non-proliferation framework on the Korean peninsula. China and France continue nuclear tests, irritating the USA. The USA wants to keep the international test moratorium intact to pacify the non-nuclear members of the NPT who consented to its extension on condition that the declared nuclear powers complete a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) by the end of 1996, thus keeping faith with nuclear disarmament. What political repercussions these nations will bring about remains to be seen. The NPT is so fragile that a debacle in the regime in one part of the world could have domino effect which North Korea could so easily exploit.

Despite the US-DPRK nuclear rapprochement and foreign optimism over its catalytic role in prompting inter-Korean dialogue, South Koreans are not really impressed. To South Korea, a resumption of the inter-Korean dialogue would mean sitting together again with an intransigent and uncompromising communist regime with which it has continued a highly unproductive dialogue on and off for decades. The North Korean seizure of the *Sea Apex*⁵ clearly shows that South Korea's pursuit of improved relations with its northern partner through dialogue may be like chasing a will-o'-the-wisp. Likewise, few South Koreans believe that the US-DPRK nuclear rapprochement or the I.W.R. deal will change the current inter-Korean nuclear confrontation into atomic cooperation.

South Korean agonies may snowball, too, should an improvement in Japanese-DPRK and the improved US-DPRK relations outpace amelioration of inter-Korean relations. Seoul may have to beg US and Japanese firms and diplomatic channels for information on North Korea. In a worst case scenario, inter-Korean relations as a whole may become a dependent variable, rather than an independent one, of Washington-Pyongyang and Tokyo-Pyongyang rela-

tions. In any case, South Korea's endeavours towards an inter-Korean rapprochement through dialogue may fail.

The Missing link in South Korea's atomic industry

To South Korean nuclear engineers and electricity experts, the framework of the Geneva accord does not signal recovery of the missing links in their atomic industry. It is no exaggeration to say that oil-deficient South Korea will have to depend increasingly on the maximum use of nuclear energy for electricity production and that a lack of enrichment and reprocessing facilities undermines the nation's energy security and technological development. Not only are isotope byproducts extremely valuable for a panoply of uses, including medicine and the space industry, but enriched U235 and plutonium have potential peaceful uses in the future, such as MOX. Moreover, reprocessing is an important part of the treatment of valuable but highly poisonous spent fuel. The absence of reprocessing facilities, however, has sentenced hundreds of tons of spent fuel to twiddle its radioactive thumbs in storage for decades. The Seoul government will have to answer to the engineers and scientists who ask 'how does South Korea visualise the future of its atomic industry without enrichment and reprocessing?'. To the nationalists, the government must explain why South Korea should forgo its nuclear potential, which is economically justifiable and legal as long as it is safeguarded.

This will remain a dilemma between the USA and South Korea, rather than an inter-Korean issue. Though the internationalists in the Roh Tae Woo government insisted that its Denuclearisation Declaration of 8 November 1991, renouncing enrichment and reprocessing, had been an 'independent decision under internationalist principles', the Declaration never convinced nationalists, who realised that it had been dictated—evidently though not explicitly—by US arm-twisting in the framework of the politics of nuclear have-vs-have-nots between the USA and South Korea. The non-proliferation framework revealed by the US-DPRK nuclear rapprochement, which is to perpetuate the nonexistence of a reprocessing capability in either Korea, thus serving US non-proliferation policy, will be of no help to South Korea's desire to fill in the missing links.

The nuclear threat to the Korean peninsula

The nation's most structural dilemma, further frozen by the US-DPRK-initiated non-proliferation framework, is that South Korea will remain besieged without a strategic deterrent of its own by the nuclear weapons of surrounding states and by the nuclear ambitions of Pyongyang, now seemingly quiescent but possibly recrudescing. Even if North Korea fully abides by the accord, it would mean a naked Korean peninsula surrounded by the teeth of powerful neighbours, including outward-looking China, now pursuing military modernization and Japan's rapidly growing military capabilities and nuclear weapons potential. To South Korean nationalists the Chinese 'support for Seoul's non-nuclear policy', which internationalists readily tout as a 'diplomatic feat' on the part of the Seoul

government, is more correctly China's high-handed request for the suppression of nuclear potential on any part of Korean soil. To the South Korean nationalists who envision a unified Korea with, if not nuclear weapons, then at least some survival leverage commensurate with its sovereignty, the whole picture silhouetted by the Geneva framework is desolate.

Obviously, in this context Japan's fast-growing nuclear potential commands the alarmed attention of the Korean nationalists. With its 47 commercial reactors operating at an aggregate capacity of some 35,000 MW, Japan now takes pride in its indigenous and top quality nuclear technologies. Japan is one of the few countries to enter the 21st century with such potential in advanced thermal reactors (ATRS), advanced fusion studies, fast-breeder reactors (FBRs), laser enrichment, etc. Japan is now building an enormous reprocessing plant in Rokkashomura, scheduled to be operational by 2000 with a capacity of 800 tons per year. Its plutonium surplus, hardly justifiable either economically or politically, is becoming a source of serious and legitimate concern on the part of neighbouring nations.⁶ Despite Japan's repeated emphasis on peaceful intentions for FBRs and MOX fuel development, many South Koreans cannot understand how Japan justifies the stockpiling of plutonium when amounts of the world's highly-enriched uranium (HEU) and plutonium are destined to snowball as a result of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties, particularly as poverty-stricken Russia wants to sell its plutonium very badly.

Though Japanese complaints of insecurity *vis-à-vis* North Korean nuclear and missile potential are not ungrounded, it is painfully undeniable that Japan could quickly produce a range of weapons—including long-range missiles and warheads—if the nation were to decide to combine all its advanced atomic technologies with its existing panoply of advanced military technologies. If Japan, not only further from North Korea but with a greater potential to arm itself, feels insecure, then what should South Korea feel with its atomic and strategic policies handcuffed and facing an infinitely more direct threat from Pyongyang?

To South Korea, exposed to North Korea's potential nuclear threat while its own atomic industry is held in US fetters, Japan's growing nuclear capability and asymptomatic strategy⁷ presents yet another tough dilemma. South Korean internationalist bureaucrats have not taken it seriously and the US-DPRK nuclear settlement does not adequately address the problem.

Superpower double diplomacy

For many South Koreans misgivings and anxieties resulting from the US-DPRK nuclear settlement converge on the prospects for the ROK-US alliance. This is because, during the whole process of the making of the non-proliferation rulebook on the peninsula, South Korea has been caught between North Korean snubs and US double diplomacy. Though in 1994 Robert Gallucci had promised to obtain for South Korea 100% transparency about North Korea's past nuclear activities, he soon concluded the Geneva accord without it.

The Geneva accord itself may be a striking example of US vacillation between alliance and the pursuit of interests. The US impatience that prompted the accord

could be interpreted in two ways: a reaction to the mid-term elections and the desire for NPT extension. The Clinton Administration, thrashed by US public opinion for immature diplomacy, needed a diplomatic success to reverse its unpopularity in the 1994 mid-term elections. An indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT, however, was an even more pressing imperative than was the abortive effort to block a Republican takeover of the Congress. For the USA a sharpened confrontation with North Korea over its alleged nuclear weapons programme, when many non-nuclear members of the NPT were seeking a dramatic reduction in the prerogatives of the nuclear haves, might have been construed as superpower arrogance which in its turn could upset the Fifth Review Conference in May 1995. Whether they like it or not, South Koreans have been forced to realise that they have to live with double-track diplomacy on the part of their ally.

South Korean agonies centring around the so-called linkage policy, were another byproduct resulting from US double diplomacy. Under this policy South Korea had since February 1992 linked economic exchange with North Korea to the nuclear solution and it continued to shout: 'We will not provide economic cooperation unless Pyongyang settles the nuclear problem.' Again, the Seoul government asserted that it was the decision to create a legal basis to demand that North Korea dismantle its sensitive nuclear facilities was its own; however, the USA initiated it.⁸

South Korea's linkage policy was to be the stick that would induce Pyongyang to the negotiating table and the USA wanted to add to its own stick. But it was a stumbling block retarding unification by stiffening inter-Korean relations. Considering that non-proliferation should hinge upon elimination of nuclear motivations rather than on 'technical denial and control'⁹ and that South Korean economic leverage was not enough to reform Pyongyang's course of action, the linkage policy unnecessarily sacrificed flexibility in Seoul's unification policies.

Suddenly, however, the Geneva accord stranded the linkage policy. The USA abruptly yanked open its own door to North Korea, after telling Seoul not to provide it with economic cooperation. The sarcastic called it an officiator-bride elopement. Though formally withdrawn by President Kim Young Sam's 7 November statement, the linkage policy should never have been born. From the beginning the internationalist government should not have dignified the self-destructive policy by presenting it as an independent decision.

Another reminder: accustomed to Seoul's 'follow-the-USA' posture, the media may have been intolerant of even a minimal demur from its staunch ally. In December 1993 the US media criticised South Korean capriciousness, painting South Korea as whining about American lukewarm behaviour when the USA wanted to woo North Korea but grumbling over the danger of war when the USA was ready to wield a stick. To this author and other South Korean nationalists, however, this is not capriciousness but a reaction to the objective fact of nuclear problems. South Korea needs security but also dreams of unification. What else can we do?

The gap in perception between the American and South Korean people over the degree of freedom of action dictated by the alliance in general and the painfulness of the US double diplomacy felt by South Korea will remain as an

intractable dilemma between the two countries. For some of this at least, Seoul's internationalist bureaucrats should be held responsible.

Redistribution of negotiating power

To South Korean nationalists, as long as their internationalist government openly avows that it will grapple with the North Korean nuclear problems by toeing the US policy line or through ROK-US collaboration, much ado over inflated expectations and the resultant disappointment seems inescapable. This is because the two nations cannot be cooperative in all nuclear issues. For example, the USA and South Korea share the same objective in preventing North Korea from possessing the bomb, but the two nations differ grossly over how to accomplish this shared goal. While the USA, safe from any North Korean retaliation, could destroy the nuclear facilities in Yongbyun with a military strike, this cannot take place with impunity for Seoul. Though the USA can be *blasé* about North Korea's bombs-in-the-basement, the same can pose appalling dangers to South Korea. Though the USA prefers a sweeping non-proliferation regime that prohibits any nuclear capability on Korean soil, this requires economic and strategic sacrifice on the part of South Korea.

It was not unforeseeable that, as 1995 progressed, the USA would shift to a policy of appeasement towards the DPRK and shut its eyes to any undeclared DPRK nuclear devices, in favour of the more pressing objective, NPT extension. Gallucci's double diplomacy between Seoul and Pyongyang was not impossible to predict either. Superpower double diplomacy, broken promises and hollow sticks, are not really eye-opening evils to those who recognise the limits of ROK-US nuclear collaboration. The Seoul government, however, should have let its people know. The face-saving politics of the internationalist decision makers only invited the acrimony of domestic criticism over policy inconsistency.

Now South Korean nationalists want to restructure the whole framework of the Washington-Seoul-Pyongyang nuclear game in their nation's favour. They are less tolerant of the do-nothing diplomacy of their internationalist government than before. They are increasingly tired of witnessing their nation, with its entire gamut of nuclear diplomacy, delegated to the USA amid North Korean snubs and jeers, watching the Washington-Pyongyang nuclear game as bystanders. To them, the USA's non-proliferation policy towards the Korean peninsula has been too prohibitive of South Korea's pursuit of diplomatic leverage *vis-à-vis* the DPRK even while North Korea has effectively defied it and concocted all sorts of strategic leverages. This is why South Korean nationalists now reject any two-way negotiation in which their nation is not a part.

In sum the process of the North Korean-US nuclear rapprochement has thrown up many important questions for South Korea. How to reshape ROK-US nuclear relations for the future? How to restructure the current US-DPRK two-way negotiation framework in to a three-way one in which South Korea plays a legitimate part? How to redistribute the bargaining power in South Korea's favour? If US-South Korean nuclear relations are not reshaped in a direction that allows each side what it deserves, the traditional ROK-US

alliance will be further undermined. If South Korea's desires are not soon reconciled, the nation may have to say 'no' to the whole non-proliferation regime.

A nuclear weapon-free East Asia

To insightful analysts, mitigation of the sense of deprivation felt by member states is the key to a permanent settlement of nuclear issues in East Asia. Among other things, the nuclear powers may have to realise that neither South nor North Korea will be happy with the idea of a nuclear-free Korea subject to the threat of nuclear strikes from surrounding countries. This is why the concept of a nuclear-free East Asia should be further developed as an international regime that should satisfy at least several conditions:¹⁰ 1) It should cover the eastern area of China and Russia as well as the Korean peninsula, Japan and Taiwan; 2) Russia, China and the USA should permanently renounce the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states in the region so long as the non-nuclear countries guarantee nuclear transparency; 3) South Korea and Japan should remain protected by the US nuclear umbrella; 4) Most importantly, non-nuclear states, including North Korea, should not be subject to any restrictions with regard to the non-military use of atomic technologies and facilities as long as their activities are transparent and open to inspection. For Japan it will be healthier to shepherd a responsible multilateral cooperation towards sharing the dividends of a peaceful atomic industry rather than to pursue its own unilateral technological and economic aims. In this Hobbesian nuclear world, it may be as illusory as to seek fish from trees.

Nevertheless, at least theoretically, permanent nuclear stability in Northeast Asia can be attained only when all East Asian states are free of a sense of deprivation. In this vein, the US-initiated non-proliferation framework, re-confirmed through its negotiations with North Korea, may be too burdensome for South Korea to face. This is because, for South Korea, it is not a typical non-nuclear framework disavowing only the military use of atomic power, but an unprecedented one that limits economic potential by impeding and distorting even the peaceful use of atomic power on the part of only one country, South Korea. On top of this, the 'haves-vs have-nots' policy over strategic weapons has required South Korea to forsake the development of long-range missiles even while North Korea develops its own super-range version, and has forced it to sign the Chemical Weapons Convention on 14 January 1993 while Pyongyang refuses to discuss what might come of its enormous stockpile of chemical weapons.

How to envisage both pre- and post-unification Korea and to reconcile itself to a non-nuclear framework while all other variables require the contrary is the final but not the least dilemma the Seoul government and its successors will have to grapple with. Despite the US-DPRK nuclear settlement a distressing variety of nuclear dilemmas left unattended in the wake of the fashioning of the non-proliferation rulebook drag on. The US-DPRK nuclear settlement does not mean that the thorny situation in which South Korea is caught will be eliminated.

To South Korean nationalists, the expectations pinned on the US-DPRK

nuclear rapprochement are easily overshadowed by the pitfalls and dilemmas built into the non-proliferation framework which remaining unsettled. Among other things, the non-proliferation framework, as nationalists believe, will leave South Korea a naked victor at best. This is why, whether and how the surrounding countries reciprocate South Korean agonies will remain as an intervening variables in the future nuclear posture of the nation. It is important for the surrounding countries to note Seoul's nuclear dilemmas as discerned by its nationalists,¹¹ rather than exploiting the empty euphonies Seoul's nationalist government produces. If the intervening variables become too treacherous and if South Koreans believe they have been despised and victimised for too long by the tyranny of a majority in the Washington-Seoul-Pyongyang triangular nuclear game, some time in the future South Korea may have to say 'no'.

Notes

- ¹ By the Joint Declaration that came into force on 19 February 1992, South and North Korea agreed on non-possession of nuclear weapons and of enrichment and reprocessing facilities. But IAEA found that North Korea had already done some plutonium extraction and North Korea did not promise to close its extraction facility until the Geneva accord. This is why many South Koreans believe the Declaration has hampered South Korea's peaceful atomic activities without curbing North Korea's nuclear weapons programme effectively.
- ² North-South relations refer to the unequal and confrontational relations between nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear ones. I have borrowed the term from North-South economic relations.
- ³ Bruce Cumings, 'A monstrous idea', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, September/October 1994, p. 4.
- ⁴ For more detailed discussion of projected damage to South Korea in the case of North Korean retaliation, see Taewoo Kim, 'South Korea's nuclear dilemmas', *Korea and World Affairs*, 16(2), 1992 pp. 250-293.
- ⁵ In the inter-Korean dialogue in May 1995 South Korea agreed to provide North Korea with 150 000 tons of rice without charge. South Korea began its humanitarian rice aid in June 1995. But Pyongyang forced a South Korean vessel, *Sea Apex*, that arrived in Chongjin Port with rice on 25 June, to hoist the North Korean national flag; it also seized the *Samsun Venus* and its crew at Chongjin Port in August 1995 accusing a crew member's picture taking of being 'spying activity'. North Korea's ungratefulness and rudeness prompted anti-North Korean sentiment in South Korea and further dialogue for additional rice aid was suspended.
- ⁶ Japan admits through the 1994 *Atomic Whitepaper* that it has 10.94 tons of plutonium at home and abroad. In a 1991 study my Korea Institute for Defence Analyses (KIDA) Nuclear Study Group estimated a discrepancy between the amount of plutonium Japan has announced is stored and projected consumption. See Taewoo Kim & Minseok Kim, 'The Korean nuclear question and Japan's nuclear policy', *Bukhan Yonku* (North Korean Studies), Autumn 1991, pp. 144-165.
- ⁷ This refers to the process of acquiring nuclear capability whereby a nation acquires all the trappings of a nuclear potential except possession of the nuclear bombs themselves without revealing any military intention. The term 'asymptomatic' was borrowed from George Quester, though the context in which he used the term may be different. See Quester, 'Some conceptual problems in nuclear proliferation', *American Political Science Review*, 66(2), 1972, pp. 490-497.
- ⁸ South Korea signed the Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, and Exchange and Cooperation on 1991, December 13 without referring to North Korea's nuclear questions, thus revealing its intention to separate nuclear questions from other inter-Korean exchanges. Deputy Minister Kapsoo Han of the previous Economic Planning Board introduced the linkage for the first time in February 1992 but not before US protests. Since then, whenever the USA has taken a tough posture against North Korea, the Seoul government has emphasised that linkage will be unchangeable.
- ⁹ Stephen Meyer succinctly theorises that the more universal nuclear weapons technology becomes, the more non-proliferation will hinge on the elimination of motivation rather than on control and denials such as export control, diplomatic sanctions, refusal of access to technology, etc. See Meyer, *The Dynamics of Nuclear Proliferation*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- ¹⁰ I have repeatedly suggested a Nuclear Weapons-Free East Asia as an international regime ensuring permanent nuclear stability in the region. See among others Taewoo Kim, 'Shaping the US-North Korea

nuclear relations: a South Korean perspective, a paper presented at the conference hosted by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, DC, 1993, 16–18 November.

¹¹ For a detailed discussion of South Korea's nuclear dilemmas, see Taewoo Kim, 'South Korea's nuclear dilemmas'.

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The politics of poverty and the poverty of politics in Zambia's Third Republic

PETER BURNELL

Zambia in the Third Republic is attempting a double-barrelled transformation, political as well as economic. The poor should be considered as central to both aspects. The majority of the people are poor and in many instances getting poorer, which means the government's economic policies should pay particular attention to their needs. Moreover, their large number warrants giving them a high profile in the distribution of power in this recently redemocratised country.

Democracy is a contested—some say 'essentially contested'—concept, and yet one of the defining features that seems crucial in many accounts of it is a more equal distribution of power and influence over political decisions. In theory, democracy is a condition of political equality.¹ The actual distribution of power will be contingent on the distribution of political resources; and material wealth plus the educational attainments and social standing that often align with wealth can be significant examples of political resource. One possible conclusion is that 'In the absence of progressive social reform the term "democracy" is largely devoid of meaningful content',² when applied to a country like Zambia.

Democratic forms of government are not guaranteed to manage national economic affairs satisfactorily. Moreover, there is little if any agreement on whether there are necessary socioeconomic conditions for democracy to work well as a political system, let alone on the nature of such conditions. But one postulate that has consistently drawn support from political scientists is that an absence of great poverty and socioeconomic inequality is helpful to democratisation. Similarly, the belief that poverty is a problem for democratic consolidation also enjoys wide credence, although neither relative nor absolute poverty are insurmountable barriers to the introduction of a measure of democratic governance. For Huntington for example, 'Poverty is a principal and probably the principal obstacle to democratic development. The future of democracy depends on the future of economic development'; and according to Diamond, 'For the democratic prospect, one aspect of economic development overrides all others in importance: reducing the level of absolute poverty and human deprivation'; furthermore 'poor countries can maintain democracy but only if they deliver broad and sustained (not necessarily rapid) socioeconomic development, especially "human development"'.³ Poverty, then becomes a key issue in deciding how democratic Zambia is today and in assessing its chances of becoming even more democratic in the future.

The poverty of politics may be examined in relation to political activity generally; and more specifically, attention can be focused on the extent to which

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political activity involves the poor and represents their needs and interests, advances their wants and entitlements. The poverty of politics is not a synonym for the poverty of government, although inadequate political accountability and weak administrative structures can translate into badly-informed decision making and wayward or ineffective policy implementation by the state. Conversely, a record of bad government can lead to a popular enrichment of politics when enough citizens decide they have had enough. That is what happened in Zambia in 1990-91, when a participatory ferment led to the reintroduction of multipartism followed by the defeat of the former ruling party, the United National Independence Party (UNIP) by the new Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD), at the hands of the electorate in October 1991. In contrast, where there is general apathy and indifference and people are disaffected with the political process, and where economic imperatives make all-absorbing demands on the attention of the majority, the political scene is likely to be impoverished. In time, a culture of anti-politics may take over; in the worst scenarios, politics gives way to civil commotion and the dissolution of order.

Poverty profile of Zambia

In the case of a country like Zambia, the records for social data are often patchy and out-of-date, and the figures that are bandied about can give a spurious sense of precision and reliability. Nevertheless, a clear cut pattern emerges from the available sources, and it is one of considerable and increasing poverty.⁴

Of Zambia's total population which is approaching nine million people, over 50% are reckoned to fall below the core poverty line (that is to say they are extremely poor) and a further 10% are moderately poor. Rural people make up over 80% of the extreme poor, and small farmers comprise around three quarters of the extreme poor. For 70% of rural households, monthly per capita expenditure is insufficient to provide a nutritionally adequate diet, even when all spending is on food. For Zambians who are in paid employment (a third of 16-25 year olds are officially recognised as being unemployed), average real earnings at the start of the present decade were less than a third of their 1975 level. The maximum basic unionised wage in 1990 was only 12% of the 1974 level, and the minimum wage was 29% of that base level.

Three quarters of all female-headed households are classified as poor. One in every 10 infants dies before reaching twelve months old; 200 children in every thousand are likely to die before their fifth birthday (up from 160 in 1980); and 44% of all children under five years are nutritionally stunted (54% in rural areas). In the 1980s government spending on education went into steep decline—on primary education from US\$46 per student per annum in 1981 to US\$9 in 1991; on secondary education from US\$237 to US\$38 per student; and on tertiary education from US\$5182 to US\$1144 per student (all at 1985 exchange rates). Government spending on social services fell by a third in real terms between 1984 and 1991. Illiteracy is reckoned to have increased from around a third to 40% of the population, especially among women. Average life expectancy, which had been well over 50 years, is now believed to be significantly lower than that figure.

The figures above describe the situation inherited by the MMD government and its leader, Frederick J T Chiluba when they took office as a result of their sweeping general election victory. In order to assess whether the prospects for the poor are likely to undergo significant improvement in Zambia's Third Republic, and perhaps even during the life of the first MMD government, some account of the political market in Zambia today needs to be given first.

Poverty and the political market

In accordance with the one-party state of Zambia's Second Republic (December 1972-December 1990) the scope for the people to exercise choice was obviously constrained. UNIP was the only legally recognised party, and all UNIP figures apart from President Kaunda were discouraged from standing in the party's procedures for determining its presidential candidate. In contrast today, there is political pluralism and over 30 political parties are registered. But only three have any significant presence when measured in terms of seats in the National Assembly and local councils, or in terms of significant exposure in the national media; and even they have serious organisational shortcomings and, as far as can be established, are financially weak. The three are UNIP, the MMD and the National Party (NP), the last named forming from a splinter group that broke away from MMD in August 1993. Their combined existence may fulfil Joseph Schumpeter's well known minimalist formulation of the democratic method, as 'that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote'.⁵ But they offer only a limited range of alternatives in terms of substantive policies and coherent programmes. None of them can credibly claim to be a party of, by and for the poor, or even of a significant section of the poor. Burdette's claim in the 1980s that 'the large bulk of Zambia's population is now the urban and rural poor and no one currently speaks for them'⁶ would seem to be just as valid today, despite the political upheaval that has taken place in the intervening period.

The limited range of choice applies to several variables. Take economic policy. The government has initiated orthodox steps for monetary and fiscal stabilisation that are technically straightforward to initiate and politically bold, such as removing the consumer subsidy from the nation's staple, maize meal. But the extent of its commitment to fiscal rectitude and full liberalisation of the economy is still questioned by some observers, who allege equivocation and a lack of transparency owing to the intervention of personal and party interests. Prominent party figures seem divided over how far the liberalisation process should be pursued. A refusal to grant autonomy to the Central Bank and the slow early pace of privatisation may be cited, although privatisation began to speed up considerably in 1995, with encouragement from the international donor community. The long awaited decision over what to do with the state-owned Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines (ZCCM), which badly needs a considerable infusion of capital that only foreign multinational companies can provide, will be a key test of the government's resolve. In any case, the government's ability to devise workable measures for delivering the potential of its economic policy

reforms is constrained by institutional weaknesses in the public sector as well as shortcomings in the private sector. It is as true in Zambia as in many other developing countries that establishing macroeconomic stability and 'getting the prices right' will not by themselves work an economic miracle. Low levels of activity may simply remain an entrenched feature of the national economy.

With respect to the other parties, the leaders of the NP subscribed to the MMD's economic thinking when they belonged to that party. One of its 'heavy-weights', the former finance minister Emmanuel Kasonde, was the architect of cash budgeting, which was introduced in January 1993, and which precludes government from borrowing from the Bank of Zambia. Two years after its formation, the NP was still unable to present an alternative programme for government. The press began to claim its initials meant No Party. The organisation's official spokesman and secretary for foreign affairs and international relations, Dr Sam Chipungu barely clarified matters when he declared 'While MMD kisses SAP [structural adjustment programme] every morning and at bed-time, NP hates and rejects it and will work towards the Globalisation of the Zambian economy'.⁷

On the other hand UNIP, which in the wake of its comprehensive election defeat in 1991 abandoned Kaunda's *Humanism*—the ideology that was supposed to be implemented through socialist means—now seems to be groping towards a social market approach. However, up until the middle of 1995 at least, UNIP was badly divided over the issue of leadership. The position of party president Kebby Musokotwane was increasingly being undermined by a faction of the Central Committee who wanted Kenneth Kaunda, who stood down from the party leadership in 1992, to return to its head. Kaunda was duly reelected by the party in June 1995. But in the interim period paralysis prevented UNIP from formulating a coherent package of economic policy proposals and a convincing strategy for retaking office and implementing a distinctive programme.

As regards political programmes, the MMD government has been criticised for seeming reluctant to push forward the political liberalisation measures and democratic enhancements that were promised in its 1991 election campaign. For example, the judiciary has not been granted substantially increased autonomy. The government has yet to publish a national policy on women's advancement or establish administrative machinery to combat gender discrimination, despite its manifesto commitments. There is a general suspicion that its handling of the recommendations to be made by the Constitutional Review Commission's inquiry into the republic's constitution will satisfy few people, in regard either to substantive amendments to the constitution or the procedure that will be adopted for authorising the change. Opponents of the government charge that there has been a new concentration of power in the presidency, at the expense of intra-party democracy. They claim the MMD seeks to perpetuate the lack of governmental accountability and the arbitrary departures from the rule of law which characterised the one-party state. Defectors to the NP feature strongly among these critics. Indeed, one of their number, Akashambatwa Mbikusita-Lewanika has argued the NP will be more democratic in its internal arrangements than MMD has so far proved to be, because it has to accommodate diversity. In

other words, the National Party harbours several politicians who are equally ambitious to lead the party, and none of them is obviously pre-eminent.

The exodus from MMD at the NP's inception was widely interpreted at the time as having more to do with dashed hopes of high office in the MMD government than with political principle. In practice, the party has remained a divided house precisely because it contains too many would-be chiefs. Baldwin Nkumbula, who became the party's elected president at its first convention, failed to provide adequate leadership and in April 1995 he was replaced by Humphrey Mulemba. There is no guarantee that any democratic flavour in the party's internal workings would spill over into a parallel programme for the nation's polity as a whole. In any case, the party's practice of imposing parliamentary candidates on the constituency branches has annoyed some members. A high rate of occupancy by former UNIP figures in the party's hierarchy also dents its credibility as a democratising force.

By comparison, UNIP will have to work even harder to establish itself as a vehicle for democratisation of the nation's polity. This is partly because of the historical baggage it carries from the era of the one-party state. The association of a few of its members with a 'zero option' plan to instigate civil disturbance so as to destabilise the MMD government in March 1993 also does not help. This is not to say UNIP could not regain significant popular support, despite the difficulties Kaunda will face in appealing to today's young generation of voters. But Kaunda was not a convinced convert to multipartyism in 1991, and there is no evidence to suggest that he has radically changed his views since. Indeed, he has recently claimed to detect in the period since 1991 the rise in intercommunal tension which he always said would be a consequence of political pluralism, and whose spectre he employed in 1972 to justify the introduction of the one-party state.

In addition to what the parties stand for, economically and politically, there is also the question of how the party elites compare, and how representative of society and its problems they are. Members of UNIP's old guard have been accused of clinging to party positions because of the benefits they derive from the organisation's income-generating assets (Zambia National Holdings Ltd), held over from the statist era of the Second Republic. Persons with business interests or in the process of acquiring business interests, such as in trading, finance and farming, plus members of the professions, particularly lawyers, predominate among the upper echelons of both the NP and the MMD party and government. In their public statements many of the most prominent political figures evince an attachment to the trickle-down version of the benefits of economic growth. The poor must wait while the fiscal and monetary conditions for economic revival are firmly put in place. If, as the next general election approaches in 1996, there is more attention given to the poor in the government's publicity materials, and if marginal additions are made to social spending as a result of World Bank and donor-funded programmes, then the practical differences between the MMD and its political rivals on this issue could be mainly rhetorical ones.

True, some senior figures in UNIP and the National Party articulate a concern to protect ordinary people from the harsh effects of structural adjustment, and

they seek to differentiate their position from MMD in this way. They argue for a slower pace of adjustment and for bigger cushions for the poor. But the Zambian people know the steep decline in the country's economy and in their average living standards began in the 1970s, that is to say when UNIP was in power. This intelligence will reduce, even if it does not eliminate, Kaunda's ability to reap political capital from the increases in poverty and inequality that have occurred since the MMD took office. His strongest suit may well be to concentrate on attacking the corruption which is widely perceived to be a feature of the present government. Also, the government's decision on how to restructure ownership and managerial control of ZCCM so as to attract greater participation by foreign corporate capital will not only be significant for the country's future but will also provide another target for public criticism.

Spokesmen for the National Party as well as UNIP have expressed concern over the dismantling of Zambian industry. For instance over 70% of installed capacity in the clothing sector ceased production in the 12 months following January 1992. This industrial retrenchment is the result of a historical lack of international competitiveness and the recent opening of the country's market to foreign competition, combined with the exigencies of privatisation and the closure of financially unsupportable state enterprises, Zambia Airways for example. But the NP's sentiment seems to be more one of economic nationalism than acute social concern. After all, formal employment in urban areas has been relatively privileged. Average annual earnings in manufacturing have been twice those in agriculture, and the figure in mining is twice as much again. Similarly, the condemnation by opposition politicians of the government's intentions to eliminate some jobs and depress or restrain real wages in the lower-middle ranks of the large public sector workforce looks to be politically opportunistic. A populist platform like this may appeal to the newly impoverished but does not necessarily betoken an identification with the poorest groups in society and those who have always been very poor. The bottom fifth of society, who enjoy less than 5% of the nation's income, are in the main to be found elsewhere. Anyway, even the MMD government will be unable to execute large civil service redundancies unless the donors show willing to fund the inherited arrangements for severance pay, something they have shown little enthusiasm for so far.

In addition to the three most visible members of the party political market, there are another 30 political parties, according to the Registrar of Societies. For the most part these are little more than one-person bands with 'interim' presidents. They have neither formal organisational structures nor credible political and economic programmes, and they are bereft of material resources. They do not expand the real scope for effective choice by the electorate. Organisational bodies with names like Labour Party and Revolutionary Socialist Party might be thought to present industrial workers with some radical alternatives, but they are not on good terms with the trade union movement. The dominant union, the mineworkers, has always been wary of making partisan political commitments. In any case, the industrial workforce is in decline; in total well over 70 000 jobs are said to have disappeared from the formal sector since 1991, out of a total that has never risen above 400 000 employees. Just over half of all Zambia's citizens live in urban and peri-urban areas and so large numbers

of poor people are to be found in the towns and cities; and this is where the decline in living standards has been most marked in recent years. Nevertheless, the majority of the poorest people still live in the rural areas.

In sum, the poor are a large but widely distributed and variegated group. They are vulnerable to sectional and provincial politicking by any politicians who choose to make appeals along ethnic and linguistic lines. This, along with the underdeveloped state of lateral communications and national transport routes, reduces the chances of one or two political parties capturing the active support of the great majority of the poor and promoting their active entry into the political system. Even within the agricultural workforce there are significant differences. The incomes of households along the line of rail communications in Central and Southern Provinces could benefit from the liberalisation of maize marketing which has already taken place, but farmers in the more distant areas of Luapula and North-Western Provinces will be handicapped. So far it is the middlemen, not the producers, who have prospered most from the marketing changes. Many growers are burdened by substantial debts. These have risen considerably as a result of the high interest rates that were produced by the government's attempts to finance its own spending through such devices as the issue of treasury bills. The most marginal farmers are themselves purchasers of maize at certain times of the year, and end up paying the vastly increased prices. Thus, even the World Bank has acknowledged (in its 1993 Country Economic Memorandum for Zambia) that rural inequalities are likely to increase, in the wake of the government's adjustment policies and the movement away from pan-territorial arrangements for agricultural marketing and support.

The poor are not a strong or united political force. They do not obviously register in the inner councils of the three main parties, and they do not have notable standard-bearers among the parties on the fringe. The strategy of the pro-poor faction in the World Bank is said to be to build a consensus within governments on the need to pay more attention to poverty, rather than try to impose an appropriate policy-orientation through conditionality. In Zambia, it may not be easy to identify suitable counterparts from among the political parties who are prepared to take on ownership of a committed poverty agenda, although there could be more resonance inside the ministries, where there are some very able public servants. The government's presentation to the Paris club meeting of donors in December 1994 might give some comfort, for it spoke of a refocusing of policy objectives once the transitional phase of economic adjustment has been completed in 1997. However, there is no certainty that social objectives would then be made a priority, rather than, say, renovation of the country's physical infrastructure. The government's observations on the rehabilitation of social infrastructures were noticeable for the contribution that seems to be expected from the non-governmental organisations.

Poverty and political practice

While the scope of meaningful choice offered in the political market is rather limited, and there is no significant pro-poor party with strong foundations and

effective leadership, it is also the case that conduct among the political elite can be found wanting in a wider sense.

The essential nature of politics is a matter of some dispute in the scholarly tomes, as befits a subject that has been defined in several different ways. But one recurrent theme is that politics centres around what is common or general to the whole community (the polis)—the *res publica*. Thus, political rule is concerned with the general interests shared by all members of the community; in non-traditional societies it will be tied to public policy and thereby to the business of the state, or statecraft.

Alas, among Zambians there is a view that many members of the political elite are primarily interested not in the collective pursuit of societal goals, but in self-enrichment and personal advancement. A possible exception may be the handful who seek to challenge the territorial integrity of the Zambian state and restore to Barotseland (presently called Western Province) the political autonomy it enjoyed as a Protectorate within Northern Rhodesia and at the 1964 constitutional settlement with Britain.⁸ But even that dispute can be interpreted primarily as a struggle over who should control access to resources, notably land. The general tendency of self-seeking helps us to make sense of (the flourishing practice whereby political figures migrate between parties, sometimes even retracing their steps by rejoining a party they had formerly left, and the endemic factionalism to be found inside all three main parties. For example, Nkumbula rejoined MMD after losing the NP presidency.

The main parties are still a long way from fulfilling the conditions spelled out in Edmund Burke's classic account of party as 'a body of men [sic] united for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed'.⁹ Of course, Burke's normative account provides only one of several alternative models of political party, and it is foreign to a number of political systems including that of the USA. Nevertheless, politics as conceived by Bertrand de Jouvenel, as the rallying of wills, remains but an imperfectly mastered art in the organisation of Zambia's parties.¹⁰

Moreover, a number of politicians are seen to have brought the profession into disrepute. Many parliamentarians neglect their constituencies. Only in part is this because of the difficulties of travel in the rural areas, especially in the wet season, and in some cases because of the demands imposed by ministerial duties. The cultivation of business interests in Lusaka and abroad obviously takes away some time and energy. For some, their reluctance to visit the electorate is said to be because they do not have patronage to offer, in the shape of publicly-funded projects. Ministers are accused of deliberately avoiding the countryside, where it is difficult to defend the government's record on maize (always a 'political crop') because of the serious shortcomings of the early attempts to liberalise the market. In the case of three prominent MMD figures (Dean Mung'omba, Derrick Chitala and Chuulu Kalima) who were seen as potential challengers for the party leadership, there was a requirement that they seek prior authorisation from State House before planning campaigning visits to their constituencies. The first two are now forming a new party.

In the government's case, as has already been stated corruption is widely believed to be rife. An involvement in international drugs-trafficking is sus-

pected of a few. 1993 witnessed the implication of some ministers in the diversion of bank credit—which state financial institutions had authorised for the purpose of making maize purchases from farmers—into high earning deposit accounts and lucrative treasury bill investments. In comparison with the previous regime, which was able to retain some esteem thanks to its high profile in regional politics, there is much less opportunity to compensate for domestic failings by gaining prestige from the conduct of foreign policy. The end of apartheid in South Africa and the focusing of world attention on that state as a key to economic development in southern Africa, have reduced Zambia's claims to leadership in the region, notwithstanding its role in hosting peace talks between the Angolan government and its opponents in Jonas Savimbi's (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) (UNITA).

An unsurprising corollary of all this would be the poverty of political debate. A shortfall by government in explaining its policy initiatives could be explained as but one more legacy of the one-party state. But it is unfortunate that political argument based on detailed analysis and hard evidence, and directed towards solving the problems of poverty in particular, tends to be crowded out by the vocabulary of personal invective, rumour-mongering and, occasionally, allegations of tribal influence. Insults are traded even among members of the same party. While the debates in parliament can be spirited, these are accessible to an insignificant proportion of the general public. Broadcasting and the chief long-established newspapers are still in government ownership. The independent print media, claiming to be starved of hard information about the deliberations on which the government's policy formulations are based, often dwell more on the part played by personalities, rather than on illuminating the issues.

Regrettably, the idea of 'constructive criticism' seems to have lost credibility through its association with the formal toleration which was granted by the one-party state. In practice, the leadership of the Second Republic proved to be increasingly intolerant of criticism and imprisoned some of its critics. Now that government in the Third Republic exposes itself more openly to criticism, the tendency has been for the independent media to adopt a heavily negative slant in their approach to advancing public understanding. The editor of the best-selling independent newspaper, *The Post* (which sprang up during the 1991 general election campaign) argues that journalists' right to challenge public persons and government measures means 'the right to speak foolishly and without moderation'.¹¹ The general attitude is also well summed up in a remark made by the head of the Zambia Research Foundation apropos the frequently voiced dissatisfaction with the government's adherence to structural adjustment, when he said it is unfair to ask the critics to offer practical alternatives.

Political wealth

The injunction to seek balance means that aspects of political wealth in Zambia at the present time deserve to be mentioned. Here, political wealth refers to features that are positive for democratisation.

Politics is a way of ruling in divided societies without undue violence. Indeed, armed conflict is alien to the political method. Zambia practices politics in this

sense. In Africa that can be reckoned a considerable achievement, for there is the potential for adversity posed by Zambia's multi-ethnic multiracial society, which encompasses over 70 different Bantu-speaking tribes and seven major language groups. There are Zambians of Asian and European origin as well as coloureds, in addition to the majority black populace. And of course there are great disparities in income and wealth, which exceed those in most other countries.

The head of state acknowledges the existence of cultural diversity and differences of view as a welcome and inescapable fact, and not something to be suppressed. The classic liberal argument that individual freedom is the well-spring of progress for society is well understood by President Chiluba.¹² If, as Miller claims, politics is a matter of the peaceful expression, settlement and modification of disagreements, treated through more or less formalised procedures and institutions,¹³ then Zambia is a relatively well endowed polity. Even some parts of Europe are not so fortunate; and the present situation in Zambia compares favourably with its own recent and colonial past.

In political life generally, and in the management of democratisation specifically, leadership is reckoned by many to be of prime importance. President Chiluba praises plural politics and says it should be a civilising activity for society. He argues that it should give rise to enjoyment, and has remarked on a number of occasions that if conflict and opposition did not exist, then politics would become a 'dead game'. Consequently, while there is much talk of the need to introduce greater discipline in the affairs of the ruling party (Chiluba is likely to be challenged for the MMD party's presidential nomination at its next convention, due to be held by February 1996), relations between the government and the opposition parties have been placed on a footing of mutual tolerance, if not equal respect. There is the appearance of a shared intention to carry on the competition in the political arena in broad accordance with certain known and agreed rules of the game. A crucial test lies in the coming months, in the run up to the October 1996 elections to parliament and the presidency. There will be strong temptations to cry foul over the methods being used, particularly by the ruling party, to secure a favourable share of the votes.

Politics is not the sole preserve of political leaders and their parties, and a significant strand of current debates worldwide on the future for democratisation dwells on the potential contribution of civil society.¹⁴ Zambia does not exhibit high levels of public participation in party politics, but the associational life of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) is free to build on traditions that date from before the Second Republic and which survived even during the Second Republic, when the scope to exercise influence through the channels of the ruling party was limited. The number of such organisations is growing. The more familiar ones include the trade union movement, which has a history of being semi-autonomous of government and is now distancing itself from the MMD, although it made a major contribution to that party's election campaign in 1991.¹⁵ Then there are businessmen, in the informal as well as formal sectors. Other bodies that have been quite vocal in Lusaka include the Press Association of Zambia, Law Association of Zambia (LAZ), Civic Education Association for Zambia's Democratic Process, National Women's Lobby Group, Foundation for Democratic Process (formerly called at the time of the 1991 elections the

Zambia Elections Monitoring Coordination Committee), the Economic Association of Zambia, and the student body of the University of Zambia (always a thorn in the side of the Kaunda administration, and the instigators of the political demonstrations of 25 June 1990, which proved to be a turning point for the one-party state).

One body that is prominent in seeking to draw attention to the needs of the poor and to move poverty up the political agenda is the Catholic church. An example is the full-page advertisement taken out in newspapers in July 1993 called 'Hear the Cry of the Poor—a Pastoral Letter from the Catholic Bishops on the Current Suffering of the People of Zambia'. The letter used the term economic apartheid to characterise the state of affairs in the nation. The dramatic rise in the price of maize meal since the ending of subsidies has been a particular focus of attention. The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace has also spoken out against the government's proposals for reforming land tenure and introducing freehold arrangements, which they believe would allow foreign 'cheque book farmers' to take away the peasants' access to land, and would lead to the further enrichment of people who are well connected politically. In mid-1994 they took the lead in drawing attention to the maize harvest shortfall and impending hunger in some regions, at a time of seeming complacency by the authorities at the centre.

But although the Catholic bishops, and the churches more generally, have always felt able to speak out without fear of heavy reprisals from government (and did so repeatedly in the Second Republic), their efforts for the poor are not particularly well supported by many of the other NGOs. They have their own special interests and concerns. For example, the Law Association of Zambia is said to take more interest in 'elite theorising' than in 'how the rights of the poor may be being abused'; and it has been said of the National Women's Lobby Group that its predominance of relatively affluent and privileged members of society is typical.¹⁶ The poverty lobby and the interests of poor peasant farmers do not occupy a high profile. By comparison, the commercial farmers are organised more systematically, and spokesmen for business are located much closer to the people in power, although even these groups find the MMD government lacks the means to respond sympathetically to many of their representations.

It is too soon to say that civil society has been significantly weakened as a result of the accession to political office of a coalition movement (MMD) which initially incorporated several leading figures from civil society. White's pessimism on this point, which he reinforces by predicting that the government's programme of economic liberalisation could weaken the social forces, is in sharp contrast to the more optimistic assessment of Panter-Brick.¹⁷ The government does not share the corporatist ambitions of UNIP's one-party state, and a new generation of NGO leaders is emerging. Some of the MMD government's original recruits have begun the trek back to civil society. The eminent lawyer Roger Chongwe retains for the time being his MMD membership and a seat in Parliament, but has become an outspoken critic of President Chiluba; while another lawyer, and former Vice-President of the MMD government, Levy Mwanawasa, recently called on his colleagues in LAZ to be ever-vigilant with

respect to the rule of law. Nevertheless, what all this means for the poor is far from clear. There are few grounds for saying the NGOs have demonstrated a capacity to influence public policy in the direction of the most vulnerable groups. Zambia might be on course to seeing the emergence of a business class that is not beholden to the state. And its members, along with those elements of international capital with whom there are strong links, may well come to acquire greater and more overt influence over the direction of public policy. But in contrast, the chief role for grassroots community bodies is currently being marked out as delivery agents for welfare services, not lobbying and advocacy on behalf of the poor.

For the time being, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the choice of issues to which sustained attention is being given among the upper echelons is influenced considerably less by non-governmental organisations than by the foreign donors and multilateral financial and development institutions. The foreign aid agencies and diplomatic community, echoed by the independent press and rival fractions within the ruling party, ensure that such matters as corruption, drugs-trafficking and privatisation attain high profiles as items of national importance. In the case of NGOs which, like the Legal Resources Foundation and Women in Law and Development, receive international funding (from Germany's Friedrich Naumann Foundation and the Finnish Development Agency respectively), there is a chance that their agendas too will be susceptible to influence from abroad. To date, the 'rapid and visible' action on the social front which Graham considers to be necessary in view of the urgency of the poverty problem, has not been forthcoming.¹⁸ Local sources in Zambia allege *maladministration and political interference* in such measures as the distribution of drought relief maize brought in from outside the country and the World Food Programme's food-for-work projects. Other initiatives, such as the mainly donor-funded Social Action Programme, have failed to make a significant positive impact on the political climate, or indeed on the general condition of the poor.

Significance and future prospects

The poor were not the architects of the political transition from one-partyism to multipartyism, but they did contribute to the political climate in which changes to the form of government, and a new approach to economic management, became essential. The urban areas showed increasing restlessness as the 1980s progressed, and by the turn of the decade the street demonstrations turned from voicing economic discontent to an explicitly anti-government message. The push for change came from within the country and not from the international community. The MMD coalition of business and labour leaders, lawyers, academics and politicians who had been in the senior ranks of the UNIP party and government, capitalised on this and then steered the course of events. From July 1991 onwards Zambia's political transition was a managed and not a riotous affair. Since 1991 the poor have become poorer in both absolute and relative terms, and there are more of them. The economic policies of the MMD government are charged with being immediately responsible, even though the reasons

why these policies are required are not of the government's own making. But society's response so far has been largely muted—a mixture of passivity and apathy. How long will this last?

One prognosis is that people are simply waiting until October 1996, by which time they will have regained the appetite to cast a free vote, something that was taken from them during the Second Republic, which fell back on harassment and intimidation to mobilise the vote. Electoral turnouts in parliamentary by-elections in the Third Republic have ranged down from 39% to 12%, with the majority being under 20%, as compared with the modest general election turnout of 45% in 1991. The turnouts in local government elections have been even lower. There are various explanations. The MMD government began life with such a large parliamentary majority (125 out of 150 elected seats) that it has seemed unlikely that the balance of power could be shifted by defeating the ruling party in by-elections and at the local level. An equally persuasive reading is that the high level of abstentions by voters represents a vote of no confidence in all of the parties: the MMD now repels but its rivals do not attract. None of the parties yet appears to offer credible solutions to the pressing social problems. At the very least, judgement on their relevance to this issue has been suspended.

If the low levels of electoral participation persist into the next general election, then a government will be returned that is barely legitimated by the electoral process. Such an outcome could exacerbate the existing tendencies towards factional divisions within the parties, and strain the commitment to an orderly conduct of relations between the parties. These are the sort of circumstances in which the political elite can easily discredit democracy, just as the people's failure to use the safety valve of elections would constitute a missed opportunity to prevent popular resentment building against the political system as a whole. Indeed, political analysts like Kohli and Huntington argue that democratic experiments are more often destroyed from above than undermined from below, at least in the early stages.¹⁹ Thus the beliefs, attitudes and behaviour of the politicians, and the command of democratic craftsmanship shown by the leaders, will be crucial ingredients for success. Nevertheless, the longer the interval before the parties offer a meaningful set of choices and build popular constituencies for themselves, the greater is the likelihood that general dissatisfaction with the parties and the party system will spill over into disaffection with the polity. Hence, one possible scenario sees the urban poor, if not also the rural poor, ultimately losing patience with Zambia's version of democracy. Apathy turns into alienation, and from there on the state, the supreme political association, would be in serious trouble.

There is an alternative, more benign version of events. In present circumstances, higher levels of participation would take the form of demands on government for immediate socioeconomic improvements, which no party in office could deliver. Competition for a share of the limited public resources for development and welfare would follow the traditional social alignments. Against a background of tight fiscal policies and sluggish supply-side responses in the newly liberalised economy, the politics of sectionalism would set province against province more intensely than ever before. That too would undermine the prospects for plural democracy. Indeed, trends such as these would replicate a

central ingredient of the increasingly fractured party landscape which de Kaunda to ban political opposition to the ruling party in 1972. What is practice of sectionalism increases the divisions among the poor, and whatever potential they might have to organise collectively on their own.

By comparison, the current prominence of personality among the subjects of political debate could be less likely to instigate serious social conflict and destabilise the polity. Furthermore, a general disinterest in the functioning of political competition, because that is judged largely irrelevant to the content of economic policy in Zambia at the moment, could be considered an antidote to the rise of excessive and divisive claims on the public purse. The belief that party politics has only marginal bearing is, after all, quite widespread. The main determinants of public economic policy in this donor-dependent country are perceived to be the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. There is an overriding constraint on government action in the form of the country's foreign debt. This still tops US\$6 billion (equivalent to 170% of Domestic Product), in spite of the partial debt cancellation granted by bilateral donors and other measures of debt relief agreed by the World Bank since 1991 (debt relief and aid totalled US\$3.5 billion for 1992-94). Nevertheless, even though the relative quiescence of the poor might help to stabilise a democratic transition, a widespread perception of external control and government impotence is hardly an appropriate springboard for moving further down the road of democratic consolidation. This state of affairs will not encourage the emergence of an ethic of responsible self-government, in which power and influence are to be widely distributed throughout the populace.

Certain key questions remain unanswered. Will the new economic framework, operating in conjunction with international support, revitalise the economy in a way that offers material benefits especially to the poor? The answer is yes, how soon will it happen and how quickly will the poor appreciate the results? The answers to these questions have a crucial bearing on progress towards further democratisation, in two respects. First, for its part, the state underpins the development of appropriate socioeconomic foundations which should underpin the political institutions and further enrich civil society in an appropriate direction. Second, poverty-amelioration is vital for advancing the value of democracy which, in the view of some if not all, political theorists is the first and foremost a condition of political equality.

In summing up their focus group assessment, Bratton and Liatto conclude 'Perhaps the most singular threat to the consolidation of democracy in Zambia today is the growing despair among the majority of Zambians at falling living standards'.²⁰ They found the more vulnerable members of the population are beginning to blame their travails on the poorly understood economic system and democracy. However, it is within the power of politicians to do a great deal of harm to democratic prospects, if they fail to cultivate respect for their people and do not develop satisfactory models of party organisation and participation. In practice, the current trajectory of party politics is so uncertain that the outlook for democratisation could depend primarily on whether the policies being pursued by the government prove to be good or bad for the majority of the people of Zambia. In this regard, the state's capacity

implement the economic policies currently prescribed by the neoliberal paradigm, the dynamism shown by the private sector, and the performance of the NGOs will all be important ingredients; so too will be the measure of support the country's international creditors continue to see fit to provide.

Notes

- ¹ See J Lively, *Democracy*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975; A Arblaster, *Democracy*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1994; and R A Dahl, *Democracy and its Critics*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989, esp ch 23.
- ² B Gills, J Rocamora & R Wilson, 'Low intensity democracy' in Gills, Rocamora & Wilson (eds), *Low Intensity Democracy. Political Power in the New World Order*, London: Pluto Press, 1993, p 5. The writer's attention was drawn to the notion of low intensity democracy and its possible application to Zambia by Carolyn Baylies.
- ³ S P Huntington: *The Third Wave. Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman, O K: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991, p 311; L Diamond, 'Economic development and democracy reconsidered', *American Behavioural Scientist*, 35(4/5), 1992, pp 486, 488. See also A. Pourgerami, *Development and Democracy in the Developing World*, Boulder, CO: Westview, 1991, p 9.
- ⁴ Data from World Bank, *Zambia: Prospects for Sustainable and Equitable Growth*, Washington DC: World Bank Country Economic Memorandum, 1993; and T Addison, *Zambia—Selected Policy Issues in Poverty Reduction* (mimeo, Warwick University, October 1993).
- ⁵ J Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, London: George Allen and Unwin, 1952, p 269.
- ⁶ M M Burdette, *Zambia. Between Two Worlds*, Boulder, CO: Westview, 1988, p 167.
- ⁷ Sam Ghipungu in *The Post*, 24 January 1995.
- ⁸ The 1964 Barotse Agreement was abrogated by the UNIP government in 1969.
- ⁹ E Burke, 'On the present discontents' in, *Edmund Burke on Government, Politics and Society*, B W Hill (ed), London: Fontana, 1975, p 113. G M Poniper's succinct 'Concepts of political parties', *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 4(2), 1992, p 144 notes that Burke's definition is not an accurate general description of parties, and prefers the Madisonian version which speaks of a number of citizens being united and actuated by some common impulse of passion or interest, adverse to the rights of others or the permanent and aggregate interests of the community.
- ¹⁰ H de Jouvenel, 'The essence of politics' in his *Sovereignty*, trans J F Huntington, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957, p 17. On the factional nature of Zambia's party politics see P Burnell, 'Building on the past? Party politics in Zambia's Third Republic', *Party Politics*, 1(3), 1995, pp 397–405.
- ¹¹ *The Post*, 2 August 1994. This twice weekly paper has a circulation of up to 30 000 copies. In August 1994 four of its most prominent reporters, including the managing editor, were charged with criminal libel and released on bail. By December five staff were facing a total of 11 criminal charges.
- ¹² See F J T Chiluba, *Democratisation in Zambia*, M Phil thesis, University of Warwick, 1994, especially ch 1, 8 and 9. One of President Chiluba's favourite books after the Bible is the *Second Treatise of Government* by the 17th century English liberal philosopher John Locke.
- ¹³ J D B Miller, *The Nature of Politics*, London: Pelican, 1965, ch 1.
- ¹⁴ See for example G White, 'Civil society, democratization and development (I): clearing the analytical ground', *Democratization*, 1(3), 1994, pp 375–390 and L Diamond, 'Rethinking civil society', *Journal of Democracy*, 5 (3), 1994, pp 4–18.
- ¹⁵ Jackson Shamenda, who is Chiluba's successor as head of the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions, has accused "criminals" from the previous establishment of taking over government and abusing their positions: 'It is the same bloody crooks who are being recycled. They want power for themselves ...', *Weekly Post*, 24 December 1993.
- ¹⁶ *Sunday Times of Zambia*, 28 November 1993; B Liatto-Karundu, 'Women's lobby and gender relations in Zambia', *Review of African Political Economy*, 56, 1993, p 79.
- ¹⁷ G White, 'Civil society, democratization and development (II): two country cases', *Democratization*, 2(2), 1995, pp 64–71; K Panter-Brick, 'Prospects for democracy in Zambia', *Government and Opposition*, 29(2), 1994, p 232.
- ¹⁸ C Graham, *Safety Nets, Politics and the Poor. Transitions to Market Economies*, Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 1994, p 172.
- ¹⁹ A Kohli, 'Democracy and Development' in J P Lewis & V Kallab (eds), *Development Strategies Reconsidered* (New Brunswick NJ: Transaction Books, 1986), pp 171–172; Huntington, *The Third Wave*,

pp 36–39. See also Doh Chull Shin, 'On the third wave of democratization', *World Politics*, 47(1), 1994, pp 153–154, 161.

- ²⁰ M Bratton & B Liatto-Katundu, 'A Focus group assessment of political attitudes in Zambia', *African Affairs*, 93 (1994), pp 562–563. Democracy and not just the MMD government is being blamed for the failure to bring mass prosperity, because many ordinary citizens still see the party in office as being coterminous with the state. This state of affairs reinforces the argument in this paper for one or more strong opposition parties to pose a clear alternative to MMD.

Frank Cass

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ISSN 0022-0388 Volume 31 1995

Quarterly: October, January, April, July

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FOR OVERSEAS ORDERS

FOR ORDERS

Political culture and a new definition of the Third World

MEHRAN KAMRAVA

To say that recent global changes have thrown Third World studies into serious confusion is an understatement. Thanks to the dizzying global changes of the 1980s and the 1990s the usual standards for categorising countries and their political systems have become hopelessly outdated and anachronistic. Neither economic nor the traditional political classifications that once so conveniently placed groups of countries in distinct categories can be applied to the contemporary globe any longer. The end of the Cold War threw into confusion more than just diplomatic alliances and ideological bedfellows; it also shattered long-held assumptions about political categories based on levels of economic industrialisation, political development, or both. As the recent flurry of scholarship on the subject attests, students and scholars of the Third World are clamouring to redefine and rediscover their field of expertise and to either rethink their long-standing presuppositions entirely or to reformulate them according to the new realities of the international arena.¹ Scholars have scurried to make sense of the new disorder, which, as if to deliberately add to the confusion, has at times masqueraded as a 'New World Order'. The great victor, by some accounts, has been culture, the new defining essence of national identity.² Others have declared the triumph of *the path* and the death of history, with those left behind only muddling through irrelevant ideological squabbles.³ In the pages to come, I hope to demonstrate that history is not dead, nor has culture triumphed, but that what has instead emerged as the ultimate arbiter of national politics on a global scale is political culture.

At first look, it would appear that a new classification of the international state system can be devised by pointing to the nature and type of relationships that may exist between various states and their societies. I myself argued for such a paradigm in a previous publication,⁴ although I have since become somewhat unhappy with its explanatory limitations. In the Third World, I argued, as in any other region of the globe, state-society relationships may assume any one of four types: a 'strong' state dominating a 'weak' society, resulting in praetorianism; a dysfunctional state trying to rule over an internally-torn society, with a 'multiple authority polity' being the outcome; a 'quasi-democratic' system in which the state-society gap is bridged by little more than an institutional façade of democracy; and a 'viable democracy' supported by a civil society. Missing from this equation is the pivotal role of political culture, which I have since come to see as one of the most significant—if not indeed the most significant—determining element in state-society relations.

The typology laid out above does not adequately address the dilemma here earlier, namely that the First, Second and Third Worlds, especially the latter

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two, no longer seem to exist and, therefore, require us to rethink our very conceptions of what their labels stand for. For one reason or another, the question of exactly what to call that group of countries that we once conveniently called the 'Third World' seems particularly puzzling. Most former communist countries can now be called just that, 'formerly communist'. But with its runner-up gone, both the title as well as the notion of the 'Third World' seem in dire need of repair. And the hallowed label of 'developing', with all its neutrality and objectivity notwithstanding, still leaves much to be desired because of its frequent application to vastly different national political and economic entities. More importantly, those of us who have invested much time and intellectual energy in studying the Third World have yet to come up with a convincing argument that our subject of interest is indeed still not *passé*. Are we, as students and scholars who have spent years studying the Third World, clinging to a notion whose slow but very certain death we are unwilling to admit? Or is it still a valid intellectual exercise to point to that group of countries once called the Third World and ascribe to them specific features and characteristics that set them apart from a group of others? Can we, simply put, still place Afghanistan, Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil and South Africa in the same category of countries? It was with these same questions in mind that Mark Berger, in an article pondering 'the end of the 'Third World',' argued that we could only use the term if we confine the limits of analysis to increasingly narrow historical and global processes.⁵

We can, indeed, still benefit from the concept of—if not necessarily the term—'Third World', although not by pointing to supposed economic, social and/or political commonalities among countries once conveniently classified as such, which even the most general of observations would fail to yield. There is, nevertheless, a distinctive similarity, a common denominator, which a significant number of countries around the globe still share regardless of their different political systems, level of economic affluence, military might or diplomatic orientation. This similarity is in political culture. More specifically, the similarity is in levels of political cultures' social acceptance and popular resonance. Regardless of their specific differences, there is a simple dichotomy in the political cultures found across the globe: some are popularly accepted and agreed-upon by all inhabitants of a country, while others are hotly contested and deeply fragmented. Whether 'developed' or 'developing', wealthy or poor, located in the North or in the South, part of the First or the Third World, democratic, democratising or dictatorial, there are blocs of countries whose political cultures embody one central characteristic: each political culture is either socially accepted by an overwhelming majority of citizens or it is not. This social acceptance must have evolved to the point of subconscious psychological internalisation at the popular, mass level, having, as a result, developed specific norms and 'givens' of its own. Citizens, those politically active as well as those who are merely passive audiences, may disagree over the particulars—is this party's platform better than the other one's?—but they do not disagree over the overall premise of the game of politics. These systems are based on political cultures whose norms and mores are popularly accepted by the people and have, in fact, been internalised.

There are other political cultures, however, that have not yet evolved to the point of popular acceptance; rather, the notions they uphold as norms and premises are often bitterly debated and fought over. In these countries, even if there is a façade of unanimity over an agreed-upon political culture, one needs to distinguish between the public political claims of people—their 'regime orientations'—versus their genuine feelings and sentiments—their 'political orientations'. In non-democratic countries there are often sharp differences between what political subjects really think and what they are willing to admit. Many, in fact, develop elaborate political pretences in order to win favours and promotions or avoid persecution. In other instances where a populist system prevails, divergent political values are often swept into unison under the tides of revolutionary inclusion, with everyone hailing the leader and cherishing his liberating Cause. But populism eventually fizzles out, its emotional bonds between the ruler and the ruled ultimately replaced by cumbrous bureaus and efficient police forces. For their part, democratising polities seem to have the greatest cohesion in their political cultures, but they too have yet to withstand the test of time and the trials of post-democratisation economic delivery and political consolidation.⁶ Their political cultures appear as cohesive and unified so long as they keep their new constituents happy, catering to the new and rising demands of an electorate to which they are, at times literally, hostage. Thus former and current members of the 'Third World', regardless of the transformations they might have undergone over the past decade or so, still have political cultures over which there is little national consensus, even if that political culture is at present ostensibly democratic. Whatever labels one may come up with are ultimately less important than the analytical distinctions that can be drawn. At the most general level, there are now two types of political culture, one that has widespread social acceptability and one which largely does not. This very factor distinguishes the political and social constellations of one group of countries as opposed to another.

Political culture

What exactly is 'political culture' and why, as the above assertions suggest, does it play such a pivotal role in determining a country's politics? The first part of the question—definition of political culture—is much less contentious than the second part—its importance. Scholars generally agree that political culture is made up of those norms and values that relate to the political system, or, in the words of Almond and Verba, that it is the 'particular distribution of patterns of orientation toward political objects among members of the nation'.⁷ Although generally valid, an important qualification needs to be made here. Political culture is not always what it appears to be. In fact, in many instances, public manifestations of political culture may mask tendencies that point in the opposite direction. If taken at face value, such episodes as public grieving for the late Kim Il Sung by thousands of North Koreans, street marches in Baghdad in support of Saddam Hussein, or parades glorifying Fidel Castro and communism in Cuba give at best a misleading impression of the political cultures that prevail in each of those countries. It is, however, easier to draw inferences concerning people's

political choices and preferences in democracies, as there is often little compelling need for them to engage in such orchestrated charades. There may, therefore, be important differences in the ways people go about demonstrating their preferences towards specific political personalities and institutions—their 'regime orientations'—and their true feelings and sentiments towards the broader domain of politics in general—'political orientations'.⁸

There is much less agreement over the precise significance of political culture. There is a group of scholars, most of whom are highly renowned and respected, who claim that political culture is ultimately not all that important and is, at the most, only secondarily significant as compared to political and institutional arrangements. In particular, the crucial role that political culture may play in such processes as state-building, political development or democratisation is often considered vastly different according to one scholar's analysis as compared to another's. In recent years, no doubt, the study of political culture has acquired some currency again, but the recent literature lacks even a broad consensus regarding its significance.⁹ Much of the rediscovery of the phenomenon falls short of placing it in its proper context within the larger polity. Among political culture's foremost proponents are Larry Diamond and a group of collaborators, who see it as one of the primary elements in transitions to democracy.¹⁰ 'Dispositions toward authority', Diamond writes, 'drive to the very heart of what democracy is about.'¹¹ Most other authors, however, are unwilling to give political culture credit for even a supportive and secondary role in the overall political process.¹² In his celebrated essay on democratisation Giuseppe Di Palma takes a consciously politically 'minimalist view' and argues that political values and principles are eventually moulded by the prevailing political arrangements and practices.¹³ Samuel Huntington also forcefully argues in favour of the primacy of political arrangements over social and cultural ones—in his first major work, *Political Order in Changing Societies*,¹⁴ he ignored culture altogether—although he has since gone on to assert that some cultures, notably Confucianism and Islam, may contain within them features that are inherently antithetical to democracy.¹⁵ Not unlike Di Palma, Huntington points to political arrangements, pacts, and the viability of institutions as the prime forces influencing a country's political life. Most—but by no means all—other authors currently writing on democratisation or other political phenomena also tend to see political culture as far less significant compared to the plethora of other dynamics they see at work.

Despite this widespread neglect in scholarly corners, political culture is an important component of the nexus between state and society. It forms the general rubric within which political values and sentiments are formulated and expressed. If we take politics to mean the end result of the interaction between state and society—as well as, of course, within them—then political culture plays an indispensable role in determining the overall shape and contours of that interaction. 'Politicking' in the traditional sense, especially in the Third World, in the form of espousing specific ideologies, rhetoric and dogma, or being subject to the functions of various political institutions and arrangements, is only part of a much larger and more complex picture. Just as important, if not more so, are the individual and collective perceptions of people, be they citizens with

all the political rights accorded to them or mere subjects, with whom the state must inescapably have some sort of interaction. Even if the state's relations with the larger society are based purely on coercion or on manipulative techniques, the collectivity of people's political views and sentiments can still potentially place an overbearing constraint on state actions. Even when such political nuances as patriarchy or coercion give regime orientations a facade of unanimity, normalcy and stability, political orientations prompt people to resort to a different type of behaviour toward the state—i.e. to engage in a different form of politics—if they are given the opportunity to do so. Exactly how political culture comes about and to what extent it is susceptible to the political machinations of the state varies from case to case and depends on the specific forces and circumstances involved. In fact, some states may be far more adept than others at manipulating various tenets of popular beliefs and customs in their efforts at staying in power. Once in place, however, the formulative role of political culture in shaping popular views and sentiments regarding the political process cannot be overlooked.

Political culture does, of course, change over time and is not static. There is a certain degree of built-in fluidity in political culture that allows it to adapt to changing social and political circumstances over time. This changeability is most acute in societies and/or political systems that are embroiled in profound and fundamental processes of transformation. When states change, or societies change, or states and societies together change, the popular perceptions and views that people have of politics must also necessarily change. During such transformative periods, there are few givens, few norms over which people can unanimously agree for a reasonable period of time. This is most representative of modernising societies in the throes of economic growth and industrial development, where the very class and social fabrics of society change with unprecedented frequency and where, as a result, new and alternative political demands arise, whether quietly or with a bang. This is the major thesis for which Huntington's *Political Order in Changing Societies* is justly renowned.¹⁶ Regardless of the shortcomings that we may attribute in the 1990s to the modernisation theories of the 1960s and the early 1970s, their contribution to our understanding of the causal relationships between economic change and social and political instability cannot be denied. As classic modernisation theory maintains, economic and/or social change can sharply agitate different political orientations and, therefore, demands.

But in today's world, modernisation and industrial development are no longer as equally politically disruptive worldwide as they were once, largely accurately, held to be. In a number of countries today, not just in Europe but in Latin America, East Asia and elsewhere, industrial development has already progressed far enough—or was at one point already disruptive enough—not to upset a social order that, despite its fragility in the past, now deals with change in a routine and non-disruptive manner. The social order in these countries is far from static; it has, however, reached a level where its present balance can no longer be easily shattered by infrastructural or normative change. There are by nature different forms and processes of social change, some more accelerated and violent than others, some more superficial and skin-deep than others. In the

early stages of development, competition over such prized phenomena as political power, economic resources, and social prestige is much more intense, if not, in fact, at times brutish. Such sought-after commodities are, after all, more scarce and are jealously guarded by the privileged few who have them. When change comes, therefore, it tends to be more sudden and more disruptive of the existing social, political, and economic orders. The whole system, as it were, is less adept at absorbing change and when change finally comes, it tends to come in the form of a shock with rather unsettling consequences. When development has progressed further, however, and there is a greater equalisation of opportunities to access sources of privilege and power, social change tends to be far less disruptive. The more developed the polity, the better equipped it is at dealing with change, until it reaches a stage when it thrives and flourishes on change rather than being structurally or normatively disrupted by it. This is how post-materialism, or what Anthony Giddens calls the era of 'life politics', comes about.¹⁷ Life stops revolving around fending off change and instead becomes concerned with improving itself *through* change. The ensuing consequences for political culture and the larger premises according to which the states affected have long operated, are astounding to say the least.

Two types of political culture are likely to result. On one side are political cultures that reflect the more fundamental and disruptive nature of the ongoing changes in their social and political settings. Such political cultures are far less cohesive, tend to be disjointed, and seldom embody a meaningful social consensus over the essence and definition of what 'politics' is. These political cultures are, at any rate, far from culturally resonant and historically permanent. On the other side are political cultures reflective of the confidence with which their polities handle change. They reflect the comparably higher levels of social, economic, and political development reached by their societies, exhibiting a degree of political maturity not found in the first category of political cultures. Whereas those in the first category tend to be fragmented, the ones in the latter are cohesive and enjoy the support of an overwhelming majority of the nation. In fact, they are so ingrained in the minds of citizens that they become part of the national subconscious and an integral and uncontested part of the identity of the whole nation. As it happens, this type of political culture arises along with post-materialism.

Recent years have witnessed a concerted effort on the part of some nations to switch from the first variety of political cultures to the second, and it is precisely within this context that there has been a 'wave'¹⁸ of 'great transformations'¹⁹ across the global political landscape. Today's state configurations are dramatically different from those of a mere decade ago. That these changes have not been universal does not lessen their importance or magnitude. How these states have changed or are changing depends on specific circumstances, ranging from internal impulses for change to the interplay of international dynamics. Most are not as badly off as the former Yugoslavia or Russia, but many have yet to settle such burning political questions as, for instance, the nature of civil-military relations (Poland) or the permissible degree of state intervention in the economy.²⁰ And even if these states have assumed their final institutional form, they have yet to give popular resonance and internalised acceptance to the political

norms they are seeking to popularise. In this respect, their political cultures are at best still in flux and at worst impermanent. Simple democratisation, though a step in the right direction, is in itself insufficient in developing a resonant and cohesive political culture that is supported by national consensus. Also required is a crucial test of time and, more importantly, the occurrence of political or economic adversity, to see if the norms that support the newly democratised state can withstand the onslaught of contending, nondemocratic values.

Political culture and international classifications

There are, therefore, two catalysts that lead to the changeableness of political culture: economic and/or social changes, and political transformations. When looking at the world we are struck by a simple dichotomy of prevailing political cultures. There is a group of countries in which there is broad agreement over the nature, form and limits of the political game. In these countries the state and the premises on which it is based have enough longevity behind them, at least in relation to society, for the values attached to it to have been accepted and internalised by the people. Also, the social changes occurring in these countries are no longer of a type that would significantly alter the core political values over which a popular consensus has historically evolved. In other words, although there may be subtle nuances and changes within the overall polity, these changes have little or no bearing on the precise formulations of the political culture. The political culture, in fact, has developed an independent and autonomous life for itself which, instead of being slave to the two, keeps both the state and society in check. This is the type of political culture found in Western Europe, North America, Japan, New Zealand and Australia, where any deviation from the dominant political culture (the rise of skinheads in Europe or militia groups in the USA, for example) is cause for much alarm and consternation. Not only is there near-complete social acceptance of the body politic in these countries, the values and norms attached to them are by and large internalised by the population. The nature and rules of the political game are accepted and agreed-upon without challenge, and disagreements revolve not around the general definition of politics but over what is *good* politics. Thus even if the Japanese or the Italians cannot decide over a Prime Minister, they are unanimous in their support of the overall system which the PM represents.

The fact that most, though not all, of these countries happen to be in the Western hemisphere is more than simply coincidental. The West has been home to relatively old states residing over similarly old societies. This is not to assert, as is often wrongly done, that it was in the West that nationalism as a phenomenon first developed.²¹ Nationalism, in its simplest form, represents attachment to and love of a motherland that is often, but by no means always, represented through loyalty and devotion to the state. In this sense, the ancient imperial systems of China and Persia are far more likely candidates as the initial birthplaces of nationalism than the countries of the European continent, where the modern state arose comparatively much later. It is undeniable, however, that as far as the contemporary era is concerned, it has been in Europe and the rest of the 'Western' world that there has been the most continuous and uninterrupted

process of political rulership. In other words, as a modern invention, the 'state', with all its elaborate institutional differentiations, is decidedly Western in genesis, having attained the height of maturity in the West earlier than elsewhere. A snapshot of history highlights some of the flash-points of this maturation process in the modern era: when non-Western states were resting on their historical laurels and relishing in past glory, those in the West began evolving and flourishing well beyond their own borders. Colonialism and neo-colonialism only strengthened the Western state and further weakened non-Western ones. During and after the Second World War, as many states in the West were forced to reconstitute themselves, those elsewhere had to start from scratch. Although many Western states had to re-establish their ties with their societies completely following World War II, those in the non-Western world had a much harder task: they had to sell their societies the whole concept of the 'state'—the very *raison d'être* for their existence—with which the masses had lost familiarity and emotional attachment after centuries of direct colonial rule or indirect neo-colonial submission. Western societies were far more familiar with the state as an entity, a state that had always been their own and not someone else's. More importantly, they were now determined to get it right and not let the disasters of the war be repeated. Here we see the birth of the first unified, cohesive political cultures, quite deliberate and thought-out at first, but gradually, through socialisation via schools and other means, internalised and part of the national subconscious.

The experiences of the West contrasted markedly with those of the non-Western world, giving rise to a completely different brand of political culture there. In today's non-Western world one finds countries that embody changing societies but static states, changing states with societies in which change is now largely politically inconsequential, or changing states and changing societies. In any event, because one or both of the social and political spheres of these countries are changing (or have only recently stopped changing), their political cultures also lack consistency and permanence. These are the countries once labelled 'Third World' for which a new designation is needed today. By nature, changes in the state are not everlasting in the way that social changes are permanent, and sooner or later states are likely to settle into a political routine of their own. This is precisely what happened in the 1980s to most parts of the former Second and Third Worlds, with significant political changes eventually resulting in a routinised, albeit completely different, set of political institutions and formats. But a termination of political change is not by itself sufficient to usher in a new and permanent political culture. Political culture needs time to mature and to become popularly internalised as part of people's political routine. It needs to develop popularly accepted norms and givens, and the mass internalisation of such political norms, especially in transformations of historic proportions, does not occur overnight. Significant and historical political changes took place in the 1980s in parts of Latin America and in Eastern Europe, the full domestic and international ripple effects of which have yet to manifest themselves. It is inaccurate or at best shortsighted to assume that simply because these changes have resulted in seemingly permanent new political arrangements, their accompanying political cultures must also have assumed their final overall

form. Institutions change much faster and more readily than do people's values. It takes far more than a new set of political arrangements for people to genuinely and heartedly agree over the nature of politics. What happened in Eastern Europe and Latin America in the 1980s went beyond mere institutional rearrangements; it involved a complete redefinition of 'the political' and a new way of perceiving and going about politics. A new political culture was ushered in. But for a new, popularly accepted and socially resonant political culture to take hold, it takes time, political crafting and, perhaps most importantly, a shared belief by a significant segment of the population that they have a common vested interest in the political process. Even if Eastern Europe and Latin America have recently turned democratic, their respective political cultures have yet to meet the various criteria required of them if they are to become permanent. So long as the system has not proven itself over time, and as long as radically different political norms and principles that challenge the whole normative legitimacy of the system can find receptive ears among the populace, the newly-formed states of Eastern Europe and Latin America, democratic as they may be, are far from resilient and socially resonant.

Democratisation appears as the single most crucial criterion for a political culture's permanence. To begin with, in addition to time and proven performance, a democratic polity is the only way to forge a common, nationally cohesive political culture. The two ingredients of time and democratic performance are indeed pivotal determinants of a common political culture, one in which there are no differences between or within 'political' and 'regime orientations'. It is no accident that all of the countries mentioned above, in which there is unanimous agreement over the general contours of political culture, happen to be long-established democracies. The new democracies of Eastern Europe and Latin America may be further along the road to developing a commonly accepted political culture, but they are not quite there yet. Through the mechanisms of democracy, they can foster a popular, deeply held sense of belonging and a vested interest in the workings of the system and influencing its performance. But populist regimes can do this too, and often do so far more intensely and effectively. What populist regimes do not have, however, is permanence, and their attempts at inclusion are often soon exposed as the political gimmicks they are. Thus performance alone is an insufficient criterion for permanence. A system's distributive efficacy must be proven over enough time for it to bestow on its subjects an internalised, unmanipulated sense of acceptance and belonging. No matter how captivating a leader's charisma, or how emotionally manipulative his ideology, or inclusionarily effective his populist institutions, he can still not mobilise popular support and emotional loyalty indefinitely. Some people may be fooled all the time, and all people may be fooled some of the time, but not everyone can be fooled all of the time. Only by routinised, uncoerced and unmanipulated participation in the political process over time will people develop an internalised acceptance of it. Fostering normative and emotional ties between the state and society is a unique characteristic of democracy which no other system has been able to replicate with quite the same degree of effectiveness.

Conclusion

We may be no closer to a satisfactory definition of the 'Third World' now than we were at the start of the article, but, hopefully, we have a new understanding of the analytical premises which the concept is supposed to signify. The Third World may no longer exist *per se*, but its historic and political legacies continue to shape and define the new set of states and societies found around the globe. In the traditional sense of the term, the label 'Third World' can no longer be classified as such because of the disappearance of the Second World on the one hand and the vast political and economic discrepancies among non-Western countries on the other. Nevertheless, despite these developments, countries of the former Third World still have one significant functional element in common: their political cultures. In the non-Western world, i.e. former Third World, political cultures tend to be tenuous, impermanent, fragmented and, even if recently democratised, still without social resonance. Whatever their specific features, the political cultures of these countries set them apart from those customarily called Western. How we classify these new political entities is largely a matter of semantics. It is, none the less, a reality that the political cultures of some countries with 'older' states are more unanimously accepted and thus more cohesive than those of others, whose states happen not to be as old.

On a purely political plane, therefore, irrespective of diplomacy, economics, or industrial development, we seem to have entered a two-fold era of national politics. On one side exist countries that have long settled on their political cultures, whose societies agree over exactly what to expect of and demand from the state. There is in these countries unanimous and time-hallowed agreement over what politics means and entails. On the other side are countries which have either only recently settled on a democratic political culture, which they hope to have accepted nationally, or which are still haggling over exactly what that is. It is to this latter group that the former states of the Soviet bloc and the new democracies of Latin America belong, as do such politically and economically diverse countries as Afghanistan and South Africa, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe. Whether the latest wave of democratisation will eventually shrink the size of this group remains to be seen, as does adopting an adequate label for describing them.

Notes

I wish to thank Cathrine Cozart, Liz Markovits, Meredith Miller, Amy Oberhelman and Missy Rundt, all of whom are studying Third World politics at Rhodes College, for their helpful comments and suggestions on an earlier draft of this article.

¹ See, for example, James Manor (ed.), *Rethinking Third World Politics*, London: Longman, 1991; Mehran Kamrava, 'Conceptualising Third World politics: the state-society see-saw', *Third World Quarterly*, 14(4), 1993, pp 703-716; and Mark Berger, 'The end of the "Third World"?', *Third World Quarterly*, 15(2), 1994, pp 257-275.

² The chief theoretician among this group of scholars seems to be Samuel Huntington. See his 'The clash of civilizations', *Foreign Affairs*, 72(3), 1993, pp 22-49.

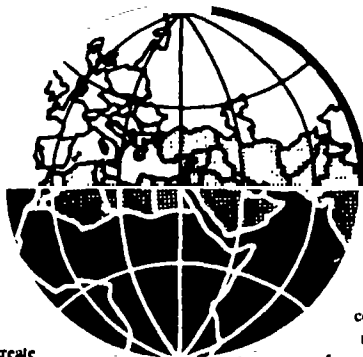
³ Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York: Avon Books, 1992.

- ⁴ Kamrava, 'Conceptualising Third World politics'.
- ⁵ Berger, 'The end of the "Third World"?', pp 269–270.
- ⁶ For more on the difficulties of democratic consolidation see Giuseppe Di Palma, *To Craft Democracies*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990, pp 137–155; Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991, pp 270–279; and Robert Pinkney, *Democracy in the Third World*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1994, pp 83–99.
- ⁷ Gabriel Almond & Sydney Verba, *The Civic Culture*, London: Sage, 1989, p 13.
- ⁸ For more on the differences between 'regime' and 'political orientations' see Mehran Kamrava, *Politics and Society in the Third World*, London: Routledge, 1993, pp 144–157.
- ⁹ For some of the contrasting conceptions of the role and significance of democracy see, for example, Larry Diamond (ed), *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1993; Mehran Kamrava, *Understanding Comparative Politics: A Framework for Analysis*, London: Routledge, 1995, forthcoming; and Mattei Dogan & Dominique Pelassy, *How to Compare Nations: Strategies in Comparative Politics*, Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1990, pp 68–77.
- ¹⁰ Diamond, *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries*.
- ¹¹ Larry Diamond, 'Introduction: political culture and democracy', in *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries*, p 12.
- ¹² See, for example, Georg Sorensen, *Democracy and Democratization*, Boulder, CO: Westview, 1993, pp 25–27; Ian Budge & David McKay (eds), *Developing Democracy*, London: Sage, 1994; and Geraint Parry & Michael Moran (eds), *Democracy and Democratization*, London: Routledge, 1994.
- ¹³ Di Palma, *To Craft Democracies*, pp 27–28, 141–145.
- ¹⁴ Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968.
- ¹⁵ Huntington, *The Third Wave* pp 298–311. Most representative of Huntington's rediscovery of culture is his controversial think-piece 'The clash of civilizations', which is really more a work of cultural geography riddled with crude oversimplifications than a serious analytical work. For critiques of 'the clash of civilizations' see articles by Ajami, Mahbubani, Bartley, Binyan and Kirkpatrick in *Foreign Affairs*, 72(4), 1993.
- ¹⁶ See, especially, Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, chs 1, 3 and 4.
- ¹⁷ Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991, pp 209–210.
- ¹⁸ Huntington, *The Third Wave*.
- ¹⁹ Sabrina Romet, *Social Currents in Eastern Europe: The Sources and Meaning of the Great Transformation*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991.
- ²⁰ See, for example, Simon Johnson & Marzena Kowalska, 'Poland: the political economy of shock therapy', in Stephen Haggard & Steven Webb (eds), *Voting for Reform: Democracy, Political Liberalization, and Economic Adjustment*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994, pp 185–241.
- ²¹ See, for example, Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. Greenfeld's assertions, though different in emphasis, are largely representative of the arguments of this group of scholars. She claims that:

At a certain point in history, to be precise, in early sixteenth century England—the word "nation" in its conciliatory meaning of "an elite" was applied to the population of the country and made synonymous with the word "people". This semantic transformation signaled the emergence of the first nation in the world, in the sense in which the word is understood today, and launched the era of nationalism. (Emphasis original.)

Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992, p 6.

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Classifying the international political Economy: a Third World proto-theory

KARL P MAGYAR

Those who work with the Third World professionally are well acquainted with the frustrations encountered when addressing public fora and students in the classroom on its complexity. At the outset it is necessary to portray certain vital dimensions of the Third World's realities. Just because third world states have an equal vote in the General Assembly of the United Nations does not make them equal in terms of power, influence and ability to decide the future course of global events. Certainly they have the great bulk of the world's population; however, that can be a liability as much as an asset. What the uninformed are not aware of is the huge disparities in wealth between the richest and poorest sectors among third world states; the widening gap—indeed, a chasm—between most of the Third World and the developed states; the irrelevance of most First World-derived developmental models for the bulk of third world states; the intense interplay between political and economic forces; the relationship between security considerations and developmental levels; and the bleak developmental prospects for those many 'non-viable' third world states about which nothing is being actively done that will realistically incorporate their inhabitants into the socioeconomic securities offered by the information age. Instead of real progress, we may rightfully anticipate the 'Somalianisation' of a host of unfortunate third world states in the near future.

The following analysis offers no solutions to the plight of the Third World—beyond recommending integrative measures as the most fundamental starting point. Instead, an analytic scheme is presented which should prove useful to those involved in the concerns of the Third World. The classification of the world's states into seven categories highlights the wide developmental range of the members of the Third World and isolates those categories of states which need to be approached differently from the economically more advanced groups of developing states. Third world states must also be appreciated within the international context, as three categories of them are utterly vulnerable to global economic vicissitudes and grand political designs, as was the case during the Cold War. Because of their weakness, many of these states become victims of external security interests.

The proposed classification scheme is but a proto-theory. It requires more in-depth explication and quantified verification in order to advance its utility. However, its analytic and pedagogical usefulness should be evident.

The contemporary global economic interactive process

The exponential expansion of international economic relations during the last few decades involves well established factors, but at greatly intensified levels.

The oldest type of such relations concerns trade, justified by the classical theory of comparative advantage. This theory holds that every producer has a competitive advantage in the production of certain goods, of which he or she should produce a surplus, and trade that surplus for someone else's surplus production of another good. In this exchange, both traders gain more than if they each attempted to produce every good in quantities sufficient only for their own consumption. The modern state is an open state; so much so that the large amount of trade has led to the formation of regionally based collective economic arrangements, such as regional integrative economic communities, in order to enhance trade and factor flows. The value of global trade in 1990 amounted to over \$3 trillion, but most trade occurred between the developed states, namely the members of the European Union, the USA and Japan.

Besides trade, other international economic transactions involve investments, public and private financial flows, official and private aid programmes, technology transfers, sales of services, natural resources flows, and arms transfers—technically part of trade, but highly controversial. The development of such international transactions contributes to what is called the 'global economy'. Indeed, today the production of most sophisticated manufactured goods incorporates components, raw materials, management and labour, and finances derived from numerous states, while Peter Drucker reminds us that the most important factor transcending borders is information—which, he says, is as fully transnational as money.¹ In this regard, economics is considerably ahead of politics in directing the shape of the global community. We will sooner share common economic attributes than cultural values and political institutions.

Few doubt that this intense global economic interaction contributes greatly to gross world prosperity, but the benefits are unequally distributed among states and within them. Those with established economic power are in a position to dictate the rules of such transactions and to influence the markets. The Third World complains especially about the unfavourable terms of trade, wherein the prices of the finished products they purchase from the industrialised states rise more rapidly than the prices they receive for their exported primary products. This has the effect of progressively reducing their incomes while also depleting their resources—which they will need for their own eventual industrialisation. As only primary product suppliers, they are relegated to a seemingly perpetually subservient position.

In light of the Third World's high population growth rates, failure to keep pace with global economic growth standards has severe security implications. In recent years the collapse of Liberia, Haiti, Rwanda and Somalia has provided extreme examples of economic and political anarchy in which the USA and the United Nations have attempted to re-introduce stability. However, even if accomplished, political stability without commensurate economic progress for such states will remain tenuous. And there are other 'Somalias' in the making.

At the official level the developed world responds to third world appeals with a variety of measures. First world governments may offer incentives to encourage their own entrepreneurs to invest in certain countries, or such businesses may occasionally be enticed with favourable terms by the host countries. These investments do provide jobs and they usually introduce some technology. But if

skilled workers and managers remain expatriates, and if profits are exported rather than re-invested, the benefits of such investments will be limited. When a foreign owned mine is exhausted, the company simply departs and leaves behind a dislocated labour force with non-transferrable job skills. Third world countries compete with each other and with better developed states, those with a rudimentary infrastructure in place, for such scarce investments. First world countries can also restrict trade or capital flows as a means of influencing the political or diplomatic behaviour of states they don't like, as has been the case with US and European sanctions against Haiti, Nicaragua, Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, South Africa and China, etc. In most cases, the negative effect on those applying sanctions has been relatively minimal, but it has been devastating to the victim state. It can bring compliance, intransigence or civil strife—occasionally with far-reaching regional security consequences.

Governments also offer unilateral and multilateral aid, which may be directed at immediate emergency or fiscal problems, or might be aimed at long-term developmental projects. For most aid donors, their largesse amounts to but a fraction of one percent of their GNPs and such aid is often disbursed with restrictions—the notorious strings. The public in the donating countries tends to overestimate the amount offered and to underestimate the political and economic return. Officials see such aid disbursements as a sort of public investment in that they gain allies, compliance and votes in the UN, stabilise faltering countries and often entail conditions that require certain purchases to be made from the donor's country. Third world opponents of aid maintain that it makes recipients of aid forever dependent on annual handouts, and restricts their diplomatic freedom, international alignment and internal actions. It may also encourage fiscal irresponsibility.

Aid remains a powerful international political transaction, as is being demonstrated in the current transition phase of the ex-Warsaw Pact members. Aid is extended to them within the context of wider security objectives, such as ensuring that East European states are not susceptible to Russian influence, stabilising Russia and those new states which possess nuclear weapons, strengthening those states susceptible to aggressive Islamist incursions and integrating Russia peacefully into the Western system of states rather than facing the prospect of that vast country embarking on a new hegemonial venture. This security dimension explains why aid is not offered only to the immediately hungry—who are often disturbingly disregarded.

Of course, such a vast amount of global economic activity introduces a great deal of controversy, much of it among the developed countries of the First World—where the bulk of such transactions takes place. The competition among them is fierce.² While they have extraordinarily stable political and cooperative military relations, much current controversy involves talk of 'economic security'. A strong military posture alone does not guarantee strength and the ability to prevail. The Soviets demonstrated this when they fell because of their economic ineptitude. Their respectable nuclear capability did not prevent the precipitous demise of their union. The era in which sheer military power was valued may have peaked and the more meaningful competitive arena is now the economic realm. The best strategic allies of the past may now become genuine adversaries.

This prospect among the USA, Europe, and Japan is well known but we are also facing the same phenomenon at regional, third world levels. Almost all the world's most rapidly growing economies are in Asia, while military might—which is rapidly diminishing in importance—is concentrated in the West. If security implies continued survival under established welfare conditions, traditional military security conceptions need to be redefined. If a state falters, why it did so is a secondary consideration. However, while peaceful economic competition is preferred, if economic failure leads to catastrophe, force may again become an attractive alternative means for attaining certain objectives in place of mere economic competition. Where we accept the link between economics and politics, we may also expect to re-establish the tie between economics and force in the future. Competition between developed states has stabilised despite occasional volatility, but increasingly major disruptions concerning economic developments are evident in the Third World.



A typology of global economic actors

Traditionally, we have distinguished between various countries in the world by dividing them into a variety of categories such as First, Second and Third Worlds; developed and developing states; industrial and non-industrial states; or 'North' and 'South'. Others classify states by GNP per capita rankings. All such systems are somewhat inadequate, but they express the need to distinguish between states for analytic purposes. Generalising about all economies at the macro level only is usually misleading, as data-based categories hide the distribution of actual income and welfare levels—which may portend destabilisation arising out of severe social disparities. And another common criticism is that, as a single category, the 'Third World' is inadequately depicted.

A study of the globe's national actors and their economic activities reveals a more productive classification system of states for analytic purposes. Seven categories of national actors are proposed which should offer a useful typology, as well as facilitating an understanding of the relationship between these seven groups. Above all, it is important to appreciate the great amount of economic activity that takes place in the First World in comparison to the collective economic efforts of the Third World. Even among the third world states, there are vast disparities which rival the difference between the First and Third Worlds. The third world contains just over 75% of the world's population but generates only about 15% of global wealth. By contrast, the members of the OECD (First World) comprise only 16% of the population but generate about 72% of global wealth.

Some examples illuminate the disparities. The GNP of South Africa, a country considered to be the powerhouse of Africa, is but one-fiftieth of the GNP of the USA—or equal to the gross product of the average US state: Missouri. Namibia, considered to be well off by African standards, has a GNP that is one-fiftieth of South Africa's—which makes Namibia's entire GNP equal to that of a small US city. Black Africa's combined GDPs do not equal that of Belgium. Currently, the USA's single richest person has a personal net worth greater than the annual GNP of any black African country except Nigeria. Yet there are numerous such

TABLE I
Socioeconomic categorisation of the world's countries

Type	Description
A	First World, members of the OECD, industrialised, liberal democracies
B	Third World, newly industrialising countries (NICs)
C	Third World, major surplus oil producers/exporters
D	Third World, economic growth exceeds population growth rates
E	Third World, economic growth equals population growth rates
F	Third World, economic growth is lower than population growth rates
G	Transitional societies, (former Second World, ex-Warsaw Pact states)

economically weak states around the world. Ranked by wealth, California would be the seventh most powerful country were it independent. And a ranking of national GNPs and annual corporate sales places General Motors into the 20th position, considerably ahead of Finland, Saudi Arabia or Indonesia. In fact, such a combined list of the top 100 economies and corporate sales includes 47 corporations.³ For example, Exxon, as the second largest corporation, ranks ahead of South Africa. These data should illustrate the realities of economic concentration, power and vulnerability in the international system. Countries may enjoy a fictitious sense of equality at the United Nations, but in terms of economic realities, this is a dangerous presumption.

Table 1 divides the countries of the world into seven categories with respect to certain vital socioeconomic characteristics. Its main value is in depicting five distinct types of Third World states, with each type possessing some unique problems or advantages of consequence for their placement in the global community.⁴ We will subsequently refer to them by the alphabetical designations of the table.

Fig 1 yields an insight into the relationship between the seven groups of economic actors; it will suggest new directions for economic models for different groups of states; it offers an insight on future prospects for various types of economic actors; and it may offer insight into the relationship between economic development and armed conflicts.

A states have attained economic modernisation. In Alvin and Heidi Toffler's words, they are 'Third Wave' states.⁵ Though still industrialised, they have shifted wealth generation to knowledge-based service and information industries. They are competitive and they seek global stability. During the Cold War, they sought a balance of power by arresting the disruptive and expansionist efforts of the Soviet-allied states. Military force may still be utilised against new expansionists, potentially against emerging nuclear powers or for other reasons, but among themselves, fierce economic competition is exercised in pursuit of economic prosperity. Conventional wars may also be fought against third world states, especially to stabilise access to raw materials essential for economic security. Otherwise, wars are increasingly seen as counterproductive in that they will not yield a sufficient return on investment.

B states are the successful newly industrialised countries (NICs), associated

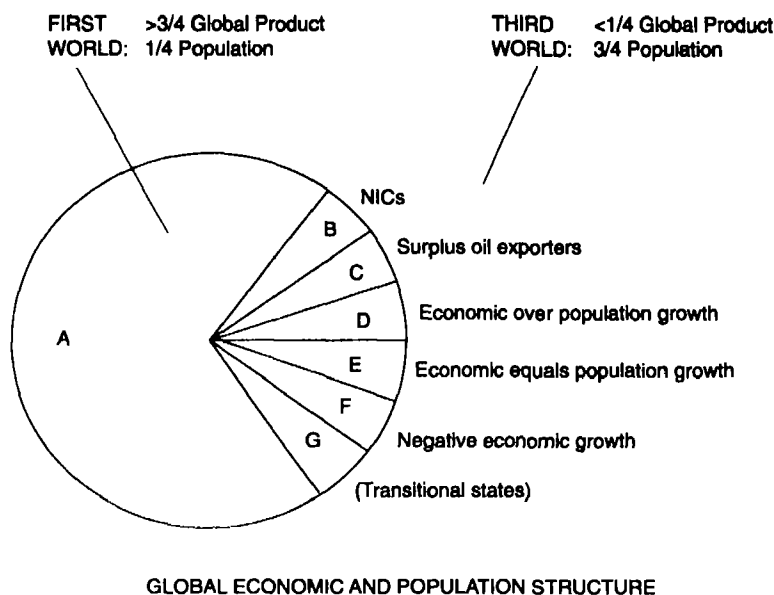


FIG 1. Global economic and population structure.^a

^a Pie chart denotes size of economic activity, but not in the exact proportion.

largely, but not exclusively, with the rapidly growing East Asian states, led by the development model the Japanese offered in the 1960s.⁶ These NICs have been paternalistically state-led, and not known for unambiguous democratic proclivities. As such, the NICs offer an attractive non-democratic developmental model to D states.⁷ While expensive military forces were maintained, they avoided wars and counted on external security guarantees. These are economically competitive states, poised to enter the First World, but not before full democratisation has been attained. B states have also developed an appreciation for the concept of economic security—which, as in Japan, is a driving force underlying their success. However, some analysts argue that there are limits to the success of such NICs as they are saturating markets in a world of declining demand.⁸ In other words, the world needs some NICs, but not too many.

C states are anomalies in the Third World. Their good fortune is not the result of industrialisation or economic diversification, but is based on their relatively small populations and the possession of oil or, as in the case of Botswana or Gabon, various minerals, in vast exportable quantities. Their wealth may be concentrated in a few hands, used to elevate public welfare, or to fuel expansionist ambitions as in the case of Iraq, Libya and Iran. Their commodities are in demand by A and B states in line with their own economic security interests, consequently C states are subject to external military intervention in order to stabilise access to their resources. They are highly vulnerable and therefore they invest heavily in armaments. And they attempt to introduce economic

diversification because of the uncertainty of their diminishing supplies of resources and the volatility of the international market place.

D states offer hope to the developing world. With economic growth rates ahead of population growth—which in the Third World ranges from 2.5 to 3.5%—the next hurdle is surpassing the growth rates of their major trading partners. If successful, domestic capital formation, in conjunction with foreign private investments, should allow for gradual industrial diversification and real economic progress. However, their economies may still rely too much on the export of primary products, while the earnings from these sources may often be utilised for political showpiece projects or for advancing public welfare. While these states demonstrate encouraging progress, they are still subject to the vicissitudes of the international market, and any war, civil or external, will quickly consume established gains.

E states may demonstrate occasional encouraging economic activity but its impact is reduced by comparable population growth rates. The overall effect is stagnation. Some high-risk or dubious investments may be attracted in the absence of local capital. But in the light of no real growth, these states are losing ground to the rest of the world's gains. And their meagre export capacities rely on a single or very narrow range of commodities. Strategically, they may be of interest to neighbouring or regional designs, or subject to coups and insurgencies. They have weak governments and hence are vulnerable.

F states are the 'basket cases'. They experience no or negative economic growth, but are victims of the usual high third world population growth rates and are therefore regressing. Foreign private capital stays away unless there exists an opportunity to develop a newly-discovered resource. Governments are weak and non-responsive except to a restricted social sector in the capital, with effective traditional or insurgency power often being exercised at the local levels. Burma, Laos, Afghanistan, Somalia, Chad, Liberia, Mozambique and Haiti are examples. Their security situation is highly tenuous and they are subject to various sources of destabilisation. Generally, F states, like E states, rely more on international public financial transfers than on private capital.

G states are specifically identified as the states of Eastern Europe and those emerging from the demise of the Soviet Union. Most are in transition from previously rigid command economy forms to liberal market or mixed systems. The abrupt political changes they encountered leave their economic future quite uncertain, and most of these countries may take some time to settle down politically. Conflicts within or among these states may be expected. Economically, these states are weak and disunited. However, some have had developed but inefficient infrastructures and may qualify as D states. Most are presently at best stagnant E or even regressive F states—as are those states emerging out of the former Yugoslavia. Their role in the international economy will have to be determined but their extensive economic problems could undermine peaceful transitions and destabilise the entire region. Conflicts emerging in this region have, to date, been confined locally, but they could potentially affect the international system.

Each of these categories describes different circumstances for groups of states, and places their economic and security capabilities and interests into a hierarchic

order. The most intense economic interactions are between A, B and C states as both suppliers and customers. In other words, the great bulk of trade is among the top three. D states, and some G states may be emerging markets, while E and F states offer poor or declining market opportunities. The situation is similar with respect to investment flows. E and F states have been marginalised and are of interest mostly to international public aid agencies or charitable concerns.

The South expends great efforts at building economic linkages between its members, but results are minimal. Essentially, what they export (raw materials) is not needed by other members of the South, and what they import (manufactured and high tech goods) is not produced by them. D, E and F states, and for the foreseeable future G states, are insufficiently competitive to capitalise on international commerce and to determine global transaction rules and prices.

Controversy is introduced by the First World's insistence that its own model of liberal democratic ideology and free market structures for political and economic development are appropriate models for all states. Indeed, many Third World states have been pressured into adopting structural adjustment programmes that encourage moves in that direction as a condition for receiving aid. Yet a more realistic model for development suggests that each category of states should adopt the model of the states immediately before it, specifically F of E, E of D, (C is the anomaly) D and C of B. Only the NICs in B can profit from A as a model. A is certainly a wholly inadequate model for D, E and F, and probably for most G states at this stage. The entire system may be viewed as a race in which all players aspire to A status. However, A states also keep forging ahead, are highly competitive and possess advanced tools and vast powers to serve them in the competition. But B states are catching up and thus offer by far the most interesting lessons to some members of the Third World (D states), while others in the race are non-competitive.

Most future economic relations measured in terms of value will still take place among A and B states. Additional opportunities will be found in C states, and to a much lesser extent in D states. The real gap between E and F states and the rest of the world is widening. Although conflicts and active wars will not be restricted to the numerous members of these two poorest categories, their economic weakness will subject them to a host of domestic dissident movements and hegemonial opportunities for external interveners. We may anticipate the 'Somalianisation' of other states in these two categories. C states are major purchasers of arms—mostly from A states—but they need to invest their profits in an industrial effort to become B states while their resources are still available, considered to be scarce, and while they can still control them. Much of the A states' interest will continue to be diverted from D, E and F states to G states as they offer greater potential for development and profitable inclusion into the international economy.

Except for the periodic attempts at domination by regional hegemon⁹, the greatest degree of stability in the Third World has occurred in B and D states—those with the best economic performance. The causative relationship of this needs to be explored further. D states generally realise that domestic conflicts and wars will quickly dissipate their gains. As for ideology, however much the models offered by A states may be preferable to their own populations,

the experience of the most attractive model for the Third World, that of the B states, suggests that Western style liberal democracy will remain only a long-term goal, not something to be productively emulated in the near term. The ultimate economic fate of E and F states will be determined by the first world's public institutions or by the foreign private sector and not by themselves. Whether for moral or strategic reasons, their plight will have to be addressed by a deliberate, non-profit-based incorporation into the global economic mainstream. There is reason for doing so if we consider that most of the recent prolonged wars have taken place in these poorest of states.

Regionalism and economic integration

The distribution of major global economic activities tends to produce patterns which are discernible along regional lines—hence also the appellations 'North' and 'South'. There are exceptions, such as the poorer parts of southern Europe in an otherwise rich continent, or rich oil exporters with poor neighbours such as Afghanistan. The broad outlines of such economic regionalism has encouraged the emergence of geographically-based economic activities and the development of integrative institutions. These are positive developments, as it was originally noted that economic communities are also security communities, because economic integration depresses antagonistic relations among participants. Also, if integrative activities lead to greater prosperity, conflicts tend to subside, as has been the case in Europe and usually among B and D states.

However, economic integration has been greatly misassessed with respect to groups of states at different levels of development. The problem is that although the success of the European Union offers much insight, it is an inappropriate model for the Third World. Any discussion of economic integration in the Third World must depart from the most valuable lesson of Europe's experience. After World War II, Western Europe's states perceived their individual economic positions to be too weak to compete productively in the emerging postwar world. They therefore opted for regional integration, initially among six members who formed the European Coal and Steel Community, then EURATOM and the European Economic Community. The six initial members, France, Italy, West Germany and the Benelux countries, had suffered extensive damage to their economies during the war and had been greatly weakened. However, their economies had been well developed before the war, and they possessed extensive social and industrial infrastructures which would quickly be revived. If Europe's states—even with these immense pre-existing advantages—saw integration as a necessary strategy for enhancing their future economic capabilities, this should signal to the vastly poorer Third World states that, alone and divided, their chances of comparable success are certainly proscribed. In Africa, 33 of 50 countries have populations under 10 million, and numerous such sparsely populated countries are to be found in the Caribbean and Pacific regions. These are small and poor markets which also suffer from a lack of prior development and of industrial infrastructures and capital; consequently they suffer bleak competitive prospects.

Integrating such entities on a regional basis is a prerequisite for building

competitiveness. However, for these countries, integrative structures must be designed and adjusted to appropriate developmental levels. In Europe integration greatly enhanced the volume of trade among states which had already been each other's best trading partners. This is also projected to be the case with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). However, the problem with basing third world integration on trade is that third world countries trade very little with each other and offer little prospect for significantly increasing the existing volume of trade. The diversified A category economies of Europe demonstrate trade complementarity, as the various countries tend to produce and trade specialised goods, while the Third World is characterised by trade competitiveness—in that they offer the same few products, such as tropical agricultural goods, or metal ores. Successful trade integration involves trade diversion (from non-members to members of the community) and trade creation (through increased market size, factor mobility and geographic proximity.) Again, this favours those with established trading histories which can be adjusted to favour members of the community—at the expense of non-members. Various types of measures are invoked to ensure advantages to community members, while restricting market access of non-members. The reduction and eventual elimination of all trade barriers among members, and the imposition of common tariffs against the external world, are the most common methods of advancing the community's collective interests. In effect, economic communities are discriminatory trading units.

For the Third World to progress beyond integrating only poverty, new directions must be inaugurated. NICs (B states) are highly competitive with each other in the pursuit of the same external markets for many of the same goods. But Asia's NICs are also diversifying and specialising—which should offer them the opportunity for productive integrative activities among themselves, with Japan, or with China and rising Southeast Asian 'minidragns'.¹⁰ Trade and capital and technology flows should be at the centre of such efforts. Surplus oil producers (C states) will have little reason to integrate until their economies diversify. With only one product to sell, they are in a competitive position *vis à vis* each other, with their major concerns being security and global stability. The common management of their one commodity, oil, is better achieved by cartelisation than by integration.

Third World countries whose economic growth exceeds population growth rates on a sustained basis (D states) have the best opportunities for integration—and it is argued that it is imperative for them to do so.¹¹ As their economies are somewhat dynamic—and they are industrialising and diversifying methodically—by increasing their regional market size they can capitalise on the advantage of scale, transport savings, factor mobility and pooling of transport and communications facilities in order to avoid wasteful duplication; they can also undertake joint development planning for social infrastructural facilities such as health, education, communications, information and research. As a next step, they may allocate industrial specialisation among their members and invoke common protectionist measures against external suppliers. With a growing community economy and a large market size, attracting external capital and the transfer of technology should occur more quickly for all than would be the case

if they competed against each other. The case for integrating these states is compelling.

As for states with stagnant (E) or regressive (F) economies, integration is a necessary prerequisite but an insufficient condition to ensure further progress. The greatest advantage is in the increased market size, the use of common infrastructural facilities and the prospect for joint regional economic development planning. But in the absence of local capital and the existence of only sparse markets, the prevailing poverty and political instability will not attract sufficient external private investment capital or economic relationships. Instead, public external aid agencies may extend their facilities but these will invariably address pressing social welfare needs, and not entrepreneurial development. In essence, more babies will remain healthy and alive—but without schools, housing and jobs. And these countries compete with each other, not for export opportunities, but for aid. Until public or private sector growth is stimulated, integration will offer few advantages for these two groups of states—which will yield most of the 95% percent global population increase expected to occur in the next 50 years.¹²

Productive economic communities may be expected to proliferate among first world states, certain third world D category states which have demonstrated sustained growth, and possibly among the NICs. Some countries, such as transitional (G) states, may join existing communities such as the European Union, while NAFTA could be expanded by the addition of other D states from Latin America. These communities could in turn form institutional linkages between them which would certainly dominate the global economy. However, this will also widen the gap between such developed, integrated states and the bottom poor and populous tier of third world states. Intensified economic interaction among members of integrated communities should reduce security tensions among them, as Europe's experience has shown, and we may expect that this will be the case among members of third world communities comprised of states with sustained growth (D states).

We identified surplus oil exporters¹³ and the bottom tier of third world states as not likely to produce meaningful integrative efforts, and these are the same states (along with regional expansionists who develop from certain prosperous third world states) that have been identified as the most unstable. Herein is illustrated an excellent example of the tie between political economy and security concerns. The relationship may be coincidental and not necessarily causative. But it argues powerfully in favour of incorporating these unstable regions, or categories of states, into the globe's economic mainstream. There will be great expense involved, but this must be measured against the expense of conducting lengthy wars, with all their attendant risks, of anarchy, as well as of the dangers of arms proliferation and the development of nuclear capabilities in the Third World. This investment option will have to be considered by the First World in the near future.

The challenge of geo-economics

While the world is still investing heavily in armaments development, somewhat curiously, some members of the First World have avoided expensive defence

programmes and are instead building their economies. Modest efforts by the British and French to build modern nuclear capabilities have been made but these have not advanced to true superpower proportions, while other first world societies such as Japan and Germany have disdained them. Attaining great power military parity would have entailed a tremendous financial and social commitment, and an obligation to keep ahead of the competition in security systems such as Star Wars. Instead, these countries accepted the USA's nuclear umbrella—while they concentrated their energies on competitive economic pursuits.

So intense has this economic competition become, that the USA fears being economically outflanked, in part because the USA has maintained expensive arms programmes, military forces and wars. However, economic power has become an integral component of the concept of security and, as the productive limits of military responses are realised, new winners in the security stakes may emerge out of the economic arena rather than out of involvement in expensive and debilitating wars. In its proto-form, this was demonstrated by the UK's victory as an allied military power in World War II—at subsequent great economic expense. By contrast, Germany and Japan, as military losers, have quickly re-emerged as economic winners. War projections in the future will have to calculate the long-term economic consequences of military action and not just the cost of immediate military victory.

For A and B states, geo-economics formalises the advancement of economic competition within strategic parameters.¹⁴ International economic relations, traditionally the preserve of the private sector, are now perceived by some states to be too vital to be left to the vagaries of the market place, since the security and welfare of all citizens, and not only of specific companies, is at stake. Geo-economics, like military might in a previous age, is a form of power which is implemented in the pursuit of national political objectives. The distinction between private and public interests becomes blurred as the state enters a higher competitive order. Supreme military might is seen as being out of reach—and likely to be counterproductive if used. Geo-economics opens a new battlefield on which nations pursue survival—by other means.

This elevated level of geo-economic competition is waged by members of the First World, but even more so by the oriental NICs. These NICs, along with Japan, China and the emerging 'mini-dragons' of Southeast Asia, are poised to provide the major geo-economic challenges in the next century. Their competition will comprise the market economies of the West, whose traditional political and economic structures may have to be considerably adjusted in order to meet the oriental geo-economic challenges. Western liberal democratic institutions, free market economies, and preponderant military power, may soon prove to be inadequate qualifications in this emerging geo-economic order. Those in control of finance, technology, productivity and information will prevail; military power will be utilised by the weak. This perspective does not argue that military forces and methods will disappear, but that a nation's welfare and survival will be better secured by geo-economic strategies than by traditional, great power-style geopolitical and military means.

Geo-economics introduces a provocative debate into the study of world politics. It focuses on the brutal competitive abilities of states which will no

doubt result in ever widening welfare gaps between the developed and developing worlds. We may agree that it might be too premature to report the demise of the utility of overwhelming military might, but the debate gives credence to those who argue on behalf of the power of economic forces. Geo-economics also argues convincingly for the need to adjust politically to emerging realities, and that the prevailing Western sociopolitical paradigm may have become overtaken by the passage of time. However, geo-economic winners may still be vulnerable to military subjugation by those who in turn might pursue economic competition by other means. Needless to say, the significant action will involve A and B states, while most of the Third World will be mere bystanders.

Economics and security

During the last few decades the USA's international role was conditioned predominantly by the exigencies of the Cold War. The emphasis had been decisively on military preparedness, and much of the US economy had been channelled to provide the science and technology in support of this war-making capability. The Cold War did not have to be actively fought; hence the USA's effort may be judged to have been a resounding success as its physical security was ensured. However, two problems for the future emerge as the legacy of that effort.

First, having built an awesome defensive capability whose nuclear dimension successfully deterred Soviet hegemonial aspirations, the USA found itself repeatedly frustrated at the lower end of the conflict scale. Victory in Vietnam proved to be elusive, and deterring sub-great power threats today remains a challenge.¹⁵ Whether in Grenada, Libya, Panama, Iraq, Somalia or Haiti, the USA resorted to force successfully, but controversially, in meeting its immediate objectives, but few long-term victories were ensured. In this regard, the USA had developed the economic power to sustain the massive effort required to build a credible military deterrent against a superpower such as the Soviet Union, but this same economic power showed its inherent limitations at lesser levels of politically-infused conflicts.

The second problem emerging from the Cold War legacy with implications for the future are the overly rigid US economic structures. Translated into the USA's free market ideological context, this model is actively promoted abroad to all audiences, regardless of their developmental level. However, much resistance to this effort is encountered. James Fallows offers an interesting observation on this matter. He argues that, like all countries in their take-off phase, the USA itself '... had no time for *laissez-faire*. After it had grown strong, the United States began preaching *laissez-faire* to the rest of the world—and began to kid itself about its own history ...'¹⁶ What is questioned is whether or not the USA can today offer meaningful leadership in global economic matters, and whether its own institutions are capable of adapting to new global changes. The dissemination of aid buys temporary compliance with its restrictions, but there is little evidence that the more volatile third world sector of the globe, is unambiguously accepting the USA's political leadership in the attempt to build a more peaceful international order.¹⁷

The present geo-economic environment is highly competitive and in rapid transition. At the upper levels of economic development, rankings may fluctuate, but economic security for all is reasonably assured. However, the non-competitive lower sector of the Third World is rapidly receding from the global economic mainstream and is facing increasingly unmanageable economic challenges. These countries, such as Somalia, Haiti, Afghanistan, Rwanda, Mozambique and Liberia, are disintegrating, or have already collapsed, and they tend to be beset with prolonged conflicts. In the future, the developed states will face tough decisions over how to respond to increasing calls for intervention, while keeping an eye on their own fragile and vulnerable economic positions. As for the bottom tier of the Third World, their organised initiative must go beyond only waiting for the occasional and rarely productive largesse of the rest of the more fortunate world.

Notes

- ¹ Peter Drucker, *Post-Capitalist Society*, New York: Harper-Collins, 1993, p 143.
- ² See Seyom Brown, *New Forces in World Politics*, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1974, p 33.
- ³ '47 giant corporations rank among world's 100 biggest economies', *Atlanta Constitution*, 14, December 1991.
- ⁴ Martin Carnoy *et al.* offer a classification system of Third World economies 'according to their ability to produce goods and services related to information'. *The New Global Economy in the Information Age*, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993, p 7.
- ⁵ Alvin & Heidi Toffler, *War and Anti-War*, New York: Time Warner Company, 1993, p 24.
- ⁶ An interesting list of 'Ten Commandments'—policy secrets of the NICs, is offered by Louis Emmerij, 'Notes on high growth performance: the experience of dynamic developing economies', *Africa Insight*, 23 (2), 1993, pp 69-70.
- ⁷ A recent World Bank study refers to Asia's NICs as 'HIPAES'—high performing Asian economies. *The East Asian Miracle: Economic Growth and Public Policy*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1993, p 1.
- ⁸ Robin Broad & John Cavanagh, 'No more NICs', *Foreign Policy*, 72, Fall 1988, pp 81-103.
- ⁹ The term is utilised by David J Myers, in *Regional Hegemons: Threat Perception and Strategic Response*, Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 1991, Ch. 1.
- ¹⁰ Steven M Cohen also refers to Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong and South Korea as 'the Gang of Four' and 'the Four Tigers'. *Mini Dragons: Fragile Economic Miracles in the Pacific*, New York: Ambrose Video Publishing, 1991, p 9.
- ¹¹ Integration in the Third World is discussed by Karl P Magyar, 'Southern Africa: prospects for an integrated economic community', in Rexford A Ahene & Bernard S Katz (eds), *Privatization and Investment in Sub-Saharan Africa*, New York: Praeger, 1992, ch 14.
- ¹² Robert D Kaplan, 'The coming anarchy', *Atlantic Monthly*, February 1994, p 56.
- ¹³ A discussion of oil production and security concerns is offered by Dennis Pirages, *Global Technopolitics. The International Politics of Technology and Resources*, Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1989, pp 64-67.
- ¹⁴ The concept of geo-economics is presented by Edward N Luttwak, *The Endangered American Dream*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993, p 34.
- ¹⁵ See Donald M Snow & Dennis M Drew, *From Lexington to Desert Storm: War and Politics in the American Experience*, New York: M E Sharpe, 1994, pp 315-326.
- ¹⁶ James Fallows, 'How the world works', *The Atlantic Monthly*, December 1993, p 79.
- ¹⁷ A recent examination by Bryant T Johnson observed the fact that most of the major US aid recipients in fact vote against the USA in the United Nations most of the time 'Most aid recipients vote against US at UN', *The Officer*, May 1995, pp 33-34.

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The so-called *collapse of communism* has reinforced powerful North American- and Western-European-centred visions which continue to see 'Western' models of development as the key to modernization world-wide. The end of the Cold War has also drawn renewed attention to the rise of an increasingly dynamic capitalist East Asia, which has brought with it triumphant East Asian-centred discourses which celebrate East Asian-style development models distinct from and superior to 'Western' models of development. At the same time, challenges to the dominant discourses and the emergent post-Cold War capitalist order continue to emerge from numerous angles and at multiple sites. Two recent books represent important efforts at critically examining global inequality and articulating alternative perspectives to the dominant international narratives on development and social change. In *After the Revolution*, Arif Dirlik attempts to recast and recuperate Marxism so that it can play a role in progressive politics at the end of the twentieth century. Meanwhile, Arturo Escobar's new work seeks to engage critically with the dominant *Western* discourse on 'development' and sketch out alternative post-development trajectories from a position that synthesises post-structural analysis with the insights and concerns of grassroots activists-writers and the new social movements. Beginning with Escobar's book, I will examine some of the key themes and draw out what I see as some of the main analytical strengths and weaknesses of these two contributions to the post-Cold War development debate.

Deconstructing Development: Cold War capitalism and the modernization of the Third World

At the centre of Escobar's book is the argument that the international discourse on development, which emerged in the first decade after 1945, has less to do with development and more to do with 'the exercise of power over the Third World'. He sets out to focus on three defining characteristics of the global development discourse. First, the processes of knowledge production which relate to and inform it. Second, the wider power relations which shape its practice. Third, the types of subjectivity facilitated by the development discourse. As he emphasizes, 'even today most people in the West' and in 'many parts of the Third World' continue to 'have great difficulty thinking about Third World situations and peoples in terms other than those provided by the development

discourse'. The consequences of this situation are profound and the modernization of the 'Third World' continues to be widely regarded as an 'unfinished project' of the Enlightenment. By contrast, Escobar argues that '(d)evelopment is the last and failed attempt to complete the Enlightenment in Asia, Africa and Latin America' (pp 9–10, 12, 221).

To substantiate his overall argument, and to address the first two of his three main concerns, half of *Encountering Development* is given over to an examination of the rise of post-1945 development discourse and an extended critique of development economics. His thorough evaluation of development economics, in the wider context of the trend towards a more *scientific* and mathematics-based discipline after World War II, effectively challenges the pretensions of modern economics to universal description and prescription. However, his overall approach to the development discourse, and the wider power relations to which it is linked, has a static quality that fails to capture the broad historical changes of the post-1945 international order and their relationship to the dominant discourse on development. At the outset Escobar links the rise of the international discourse on development, and the growing North American and Western European interest in global modernization, to the *discovery* of poverty in Asia, Africa and Latin America after World War II. Escobar makes a sharp contrast between the new North American and Western European approach to poverty and development which emerged after 1945 and the way in which, in his words, 'the concern with poverty' in the colonial era 'was conditioned by the belief that even if the *natives* could be somewhat enlightened by the presence of the colonizer, not much could be done about their poverty because their economic development was pointless' (pp 21–22).

This periodization holds out the Second World War as a particularly sharp break with the past, overlooking the way in which liberal developmentalism had already begun to emerge in Anglo-American discourses on Latin America, Africa and Asia by the 1930s, at the same time as explicitly racist ideas about the inherent inability of Asians, Africans and Latin Americans to *progress* survived into the post-1945 era. For example, in Latin America by the end of the 1930s, US policy-makers and Latin American specialists had begun to articulate an early version of modernization theory, which became a key feature of US foreign policy and North American (or in Escobar's terminology *Western*) development discourse in the years after 1945. By the 1930s, North American policy-makers and academics (in the context of the New Deal and the Good Neighbor Policy) were increasingly willing to perceive Latin Americans as capable of achieving a level of political and economic progress and development similar to that of the US, under the tutelage of a benevolent and superior North America. Nevertheless, the dominant North American approach to Latin America up to the end of the Second World War and beyond also continued to be shaped by racist attitudes about a US civilising mission.¹ Following the defeat of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan, decolonization and the onset of the Cold War, ideas about North American and Western European superiority were revised, but the foundation on which they were constructed dated back to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and still reflected continuity with the British Empire's *white man's burden*, the French *mission civilisatrice*, and the racist paternalism of the pre-1945 US imperial state in the Americas and beyond.²

It was the Cold War, and the threat embodied by the state-socialist model of development, along with the growing power of nationalist movements in Asia and Africa, which was particularly responsible for the reconfiguration of the colonial-style civilising missions and the onset of the US-led *war on poverty*. Although Escobar does subsequently mention the Cold War in passing as part of a number of other factors which shaped the emergence of the development discourse after 1945, he provides little sense of the relationship between the Cold War, the development discourse and the *discovery*

of poverty in the *Third World*. He does not draw out the way in which it was widely assumed in US government and area-studies circles, after 1945, that the poverty of the so-called underdeveloped nations facilitated the spread of international communism.³ Nor does he note that it was also widely assumed that modernization would not only bring an end to poverty, but also undercut the appeal of the state-socialist model and the possibility of communist revolution. As the Cold War took shape, the two *superpowers* loomed over virtually every international and regional politico-military crisis at the same time as they held dramatically different models of development out to what became known as the *Third World* (the term itself initially referred to the growing number of governments in Asia, Africa and Latin America who, at least rhetorically professed a desire to follow a third path between capitalism and socialism). Despite Escobar's emphasis, at the outset, on the linkages between international power relations and the development discourse, the Cold War, US-Soviet rivalry and the concern about the state-socialist model do not come out in his analysis of the emergence of the dominant discourse on development between 1945 and 1955.

At the same time, Escobar's discussion of the period up to the mid-1950s certainly emphasizes the way in which the emerging US *national security* state sought to consolidate its hegemony in an effort to maintain and open up markets and new investment opportunities as well as sources of raw materials around the world. He also notes that the 'fundamental preoccupation of the period was the revitalisation of the European economy' which resulted in the Marshall Plan. However, his analysis of why the US was willing to aid Western Europe in this fashion again fails to take the Cold War fully into account. He concludes that, unlike Western Europe 'the Third World was not deserving of the same treatment', noting the paltry amount that flowed to Latin America in the same period (pp 32-33). Escobar implies that the *Third World* did not get a Marshall Plan of its own for reasons of *Western* solidarity and even *Western* racism. While cultural and racial bonds certainly continued to be invoked as racial conceptions of *development* meshed with Cold War imperatives, Escobar's analysis of the Marshall Plan overlooks the way in which certain parts of the so-called *Third World* (notably North-east Asia) did receive massive amounts of *development* aid from the US in the second half of the 1940s and early 1950s. And they did so because of their proximity to the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. The initial focus of US attention on Western and Southern Europe, and East Asia, particularly the Korean Peninsula and Japan, flowed from the perception that these areas were the most open to direct military assault by the Soviet Union and its allies. This was the context in which Western Europe got the Marshall Plan. This was also the context in which South Korea, Taiwan and Japan received large amounts of economic and military aid, especially after the CCP came to power in China in 1949.⁴ The relative importance of Latin America to US globalism after 1945 is reflected in the way that between 1945 and 1955 Latin America as a whole only received 3 per cent of all non-military US aid distributed, while Western Europe received 65 per cent; however, the Asia-Pacific received almost 20 per cent, with South Korea receiving more than all the countries of Latin America put together.⁵

Escobar's relatively ahistorical conception of the international power relations which provided the context for the emergence and trajectory of the dominant development discourse is again apparent in his discussion of the rise of area studies and development studies after 1945. He emphasizes that the 'new awareness of the importance of the Third World in global economy and politics' by the end of the 1940s 'brought with it a recognition of the need to obtain more accurate knowledge about the Third World'. However, Escobar—citing the claim of a well-known Latin Americanist that, after 1945 Latin America 'became almost overnight the center of attraction to government officials,

as well as scholars and teachers'—gives the reader the distinct impression that Latin American studies immediately took off as part of the wider rise of area studies and development studies after World War II (pp 36–37). But, in the same way that US development aid to Latin America was minimal in the 1950s, no more than a small percentage of the growing number of North American area-studies specialists turned their attention to Latin America in the period between 1945 and 1959. Up to the end of the 1950s, a variety of flashpoints on the Eurasian land mass occupied Washington's attention far more than Latin America (or Africa for that matter), and this was reflected in the failure of Latin American studies to grow as quickly as other area-studies programs (Escobar's tendency to use Latin America, or more particularly Colombia, as an exemplar of a wider *Third World* is again part of the problem here and this will be taken up in more detail below). Although US policy-makers always assumed that the US had an important *national interest* in Latin America, the perceived lack of threats to that *national interest* relative to Eurasia, allowed for Washington's attention to focus elsewhere throughout much of the 1950s. The shift in US foreign policy in Latin America at the end of the 1950s can only be understood with reference to the Cuban Revolution of 1959. And, despite, Escobar's analysis, the Cuban revolution was also the major turning point in the rise of Latin American studies. As Stanford political scientist, Richard Fagen argued almost twenty years ago, 'it took a hot wind from the South to fan the flames, and large infusions of cash from the US government and private foundations to fuel the conflagration'.⁶ The growing concern in North America in the early 1960s, that the Cuban *contagion* would spread to the rest of the hemisphere, caused a dramatic shift in US policy and stimulated what Jules Benjamin has described as 'the full flowering of liberal developmentalism' in the form of the Alliance for Progress.⁷ However, when Escobar does turn his attention briefly to the Alliance for Progress, he does not mention the wider shift which it represented and how that influenced the development discourse as the Cold War entered a new phase in Latin America and beyond (pp 40, 89).

Escobar's failure to ground his analysis of the vicissitudes of the dominant development discourse in the history of the Cold War is a major shortcoming of his overall attempt to map the rise of an increasingly global discourse on development. In a broader sense his minimalist approach to the changing contours of the international political economy gives the dominant discourse on development an overly homogenous and autonomous quality. This is further exacerbated by a lack of analysis of the various institutions which provide the main nexus for the development discourse. For example, his discussion of the World Bank, which looms large in his study, makes only the most limited attempt to locate it in relation to changing post-1945 international power relations. There is also, somewhat surprisingly, a complete absence of any discussion of the significance of the end of the Cold War. Furthermore, the industrial rise of East Asia, the shift in the global politico-economic balance which it embodies, and the discursive significance of the East Asian *Miracle* in relation to the dominant discourse on development is also ignored.⁸ Despite the emergence of a dynamic 'new' East Asian capitalist model, Escobar's analysis continues to hold up *Western* ideas and power as the main problem and his whole project is framed around a distinction between the global power of the Western model vis-a-vis local *Third World* efforts at resistance. Even though he introduces the concept of hybridity at the end of his book, and also acknowledges the imprecision of the term the *West*, Escobar repeatedly invokes the *West* and *Western* in a fashion which reinforces a relatively fixed conception of international power relations (p 224). Ironically, this reflects a form of the very eurocentrism his wider project seeks to overturn. Given Escobar's apparent privileging of international power relations (which will be discussed in more detail

below) his neglect of the rise of East Asia and the end of the Cold War is particularly surprising.

While, Escobar still represents the *West* as the motor of a universalising and destructive capitalist modernity, Arif Dirlik does take the rise of East Asia into account and its implications for international power relations and the broader cultural determinants of the dominant discourse on development. At the same time, Dirlik argues that the anticipated end to eurocentrism which the rise of the *East* is thought to embody is an 'illusion' insofar as '(c)apitalist culture, as it has taken shape, holds Eurocentrism in the very structure of its narrative, which may explain why, even as Europe and the United States lose their domination of the capitalist world economy, culturally European and (North) American values are still dominant globally'. Furthermore, Dirlik also makes the point that, although powerful East Asian discourses deploy ideas about *Asian* or Confucian values to explain the industrialisation of the region, these formulations have been produced within a wider framework that immediately and always means that its effort to generate what Dirlik calls 'alternative values to those of EuroAmerican origin' is already contaminated. From his perspective, the rise of East Asia and the Confucian revival does not represent the triumph of Eastern values, but the successful 'articulation' of East Asian cultures 'into a capitalist narrative'. Nevertheless, he emphasizes that this represents an important cultural shift in the international political economy insofar as the rise of 'non-EuroAmerican capitalisms' is directly linked to the appearance of 'new voices that challenge EuroAmerican models by calling for forms of organization that are derived from alternative cultural constructions' (pp 51–52, 74). As Dirlik suggests, the world is clearly in the midst of an important shift in regional and global power relations with immense cultural significance. However, East Asian triumphalist discourses still have more to do with the maintenance of hegemony within the Asia-Pacific than they do with the projection of power beyond the region. Post-Cold War international political economy remains centred on a transitional type of Anglo-American liberalism which is grounded in the politico-military power of the US.⁹ At the same time, in the context of the gradual alteration of a long standing international socio-cultural hierarchy linked to a historical political economy centred on North America and Western Europe, which conferred particular privileges on and assigned particular agency to 'occidentals', the discursive power of the East-Asian model continues to grow.

The Mirage of Modernization: post-Cold War capitalism and the fate of the *Third World*

The rise of East Asia and the end of the Cold War have contributed to the re-configuration of international power relations and helped call further into question the relevance of *Western* concepts of modernization and development. These changes have also raised questions about the politico-intellectual utility of the notion of a *Third World*, and a key aspect of Dirlik and Escobar's books is their effort to problematize the *Third World*. Both works question the homogenising and totalising effects of dominant liberal and marxist discourses on *development* and the *Third World*; however, their continued, albeit somewhat revised, use of the notion of a *Third World* means that their overall analysis often still privileges international power relations and homogenises diverse sites of accommodation and resistance. Dirlik argues that while 'parts of the earlier Third World are today on the pathways of transnational capital and belong in the *developed* sector of the world economy' areas of the First World 'are hardly distinguishable in way of life from what used to be viewed as Third World characteristics'. At the same time, he sees the North-South distinction as having replaced the earlier distinction between three worlds; however, he emphasizes that 'north and south' are not just geographical

places but are also 'metaphorical references'. From his perspective the North represents 'the pathways of transnational capital', while the South refers to the 'marginalized populations of the world, regardless of their location' (pp 52, 80–81). While Dirlik acknowledges the totalising and imprecise character of the *Third World*, he suggests that First World–Third World and North–South distinctions continue to be salient as long as they are not taken too literally in geographical terms. However, these distinctions are now thoroughly implicated in a conception of international inequality which takes national-territorial boundaries as the key determinant of privilege. Any effort to appropriate the *Third World* to a more progressive contemporary political project in an age of globalization runs the risk of allowing categories that did a poor job of representing global inequality in the Cold War era to continue to impose a two-dimensional conception of power on a complex world of wealth and poverty.¹⁰

The continued reliance on a somewhat revised conception of the *Third World* is more pronounced in the case of Escobar's book. While he points to the homogenising character of such terminology his own usage results in quite grand conclusions which are at odds with his emphasis on local knowledge and particular resistance strategies in the face of a totalising development discourse. Escobar directly challenges the notion of a *Third World* as it is deployed within the dominant development discourse, but he continues to use the term and even generalise about the *Third World* on the basis of particular issues and areas. For example, Escobar devotes considerable attention to women and development, and he repeatedly invokes the category of Third World women, or cites approvingly authors who work within such a framework. Furthermore, his discussion of Third World women is directly linked to a more specific discussion of programs aimed at women and development in Colombia (pp 171–192). This leaves the reader with the impression that women in Colombia can be read as women in the *Third World*. At the outset, Escobar even notes that the examples in his book focus on 'one country, Colombia, and one problem area, malnutrition and hunger' which he argues 'should ground the reader in the geopolitical and social aspects of development' (Escobar, note 15, p 228). However, given his own critique of the dominant development discourse and its deployment of the concept of the *Third World*, his examples should have been more diverse and he should have avoided grounding too many conclusions about an illusory *Third World* in an analysis of Colombia. While this problem may be less pronounced in the case of Dirlik, his book also has a tendency to generalise about global problems on the basis of his discussion and familiarity with China and the Asia-Pacific.

Near the end of his book Escobar talks about the need to reconfigure the Third World and about the need to represent it in new ways (p 224). However, even radical attempts to reinvigorate the *Third World* continue to homogenise disparate problems and initiatives for change. The deployment of the *Third World*, even by counter-hegemonic forces, maintains and legitimates the linkages between a variety of *Third World* intellectuals and movements which continue to privilege international political and economic relationships over more localised dynamics. The idea of a *Third World* has lost most, if not all, of its analytical utility and progressive political content, and now allows primarily for the homogenisation of the history of diverse parts of the world. The dominant discourse on development views the *development* of the *Third World* as a technical problem that can be solved by relatively universal solutions drawn from North America and Western Europe, and now Japan and East-Asia, regardless of the particular histories of the social formations making the transition from so-called underdevelopment to development. At the same time, political and intellectual elites in, or from, the so-called *Third World* have emerged claiming to speak for the *Third World* even though they are often deeply

implicated in the prevailing international discourses and structures which work to manage the *Third World*.¹¹

Related to the continued conceptual and political reliance on the *Third World* is the privileging of international power relations as the key to local problems. More specifically, Dirlik, and Escobar (pp 97–98, 126), allude to but never really address the space between the local and the global. For example, halfway through *Encountering Development* Escobar notes that he 'still' has to 'show how the discourse of development gets dispersed in or through a field of practices' and 'how it relates to concrete interventions that organise the production of types of knowledge and forms of power, relating one to the other'. To do this he argues that '(i)t is necessary to scrutinize the specific practices through which international lending agencies and Third World governments carry out their task, bringing together bureaucrats and experts of all kinds with their Third World 'beneficiaries'—poor women, marginalised urban dwellers and peasants (pp 104–105). While the examination of 'the dispersion of power' is the objective, his analysis, which is focused on Colombia, never brings out the multi-layered processes of accommodation and resistance which characterize political change, nor does he ever make clear how the World Bank's strategy of Integrated Rural Development (which he looks at in detail) articulates with local, regional and *national* configurations of power. Escobar gives the impression that local resistance is primarily against a *Western* knowledge backed up by the power of the IMF-World Bank, transnational capital and the governments of the US and Western Europe. Despite the focus of his book, at no point does the reader get any sense as to how the dominant development discourse is played out in relation to the regional and *national* particularities of the Colombian social formation (which is his chosen example) or the particularities of any other social formation beyond the most local level.¹²

Ultimately, Escobar only touches on what is central to the *diffusion* of development ideas. That is the refraction and domestication outwards and downwards of development ideas and the power relations which occupy the space between the global and the local. In both books, there is little or no effort to map out how local, regional and *national* power relations articulate with the material and discursive power of transnational capital and the IMF-World Bank (it is only near the end of the book where he begins to map out alternatives that he talks about the way local discourses enter into hybridising relationships with the dominant discourse on development and modernity and even then the space between the local and the global remains uncharted territory). In Escobar's case, what is needed is much more attention to regional and *national* discourses on development. As Arjun Appadurai has argued, the 'new' global political economy and socio-cultural order 'has to be seen as a complex, overlapping disjunctive order' of 'disorganized capitalism'. He draws attention to the way in which a variety of 'forces' which flow from particular centers of power are rapidly 'indigenized' and the influence of metropolitan ideas and models is of less concern to many people than the power of a local, regional or *national* elite.¹³ For example, the New Order in Indonesia, which came into being in 1965–1966, has increasingly incorporated the people of the archipelago into a Java-centred imperium dominated by an elite whose hegemony is legitimated by the selective appropriation of the symbols of the *Javanese* and *Indonesian* past, as well as considerable coercion. Also central to the hegemony of the Java-centred elite and the New Order state has been the production of a powerful Indonesian development discourse, which has exhorted Indonesians to work together to develop the *nation* and bring about economic *takeoff*. The state sponsored conception of economic development (*pembangunan*) has emerged as a key element in wider efforts to legitimate the New Order and Soeharto himself is proudly styled the *father of development* (*Bapak Pembangunan*). At the same time, the power of the New Order-style national develop-

ment (pembangunan) and the Java-centred elite have been transformed and mediated by the wider processes of the global political economy and uneven capitalist development and by the strategies of subaltern accommodation and resistance pursued at a wide range of regional and local sites.¹⁴

Reconstructing Resistance: Marxism and post-development trajectories

In contrast to Escobar, who focuses on the global post-1945 discourse on capitalist *development* and on local challenges to it, Dirlik provides a wide ranging history of capitalism from the eighteenth century. At the same time, he attempts to historicize marxism (he focuses on Chinese Marxism which he argues is 'a localized or vernacular version of a global Marxism that claimed a subject position for itself within a universalized Marxist discourse') and evaluate the rise, demise and significance of the state-socialist model or 'actually existing socialism'. From his perspective, all of the main concepts of marxism, including class analysis, are inadequate to the task of 'liberation'. Nor do they represent a sufficient means by which to come to grips with 'the full complexity of contemporary capitalism' and 'the social formations and problems that it has generated'. He is opposed to efforts at totalisation and attempts to 'open up Marxism to categories that are not implicit in Marxist theoretical formulations'. Ultimately, he argues that a new 'vision of liberation' has to come from outside 'because it is not immanent in Marxism as proponents have assumed in the past' (pp 6, 31). He argues that the 'internalization' by marxism (as evidenced in the Chinese case and elsewhere) 'of the spatial and temporal assumptions of the capitalist mode of production has undercut the ability of Marxism to serve as a genuine basis for resistance to capitalism'. In particular he argues that the crucial shortcoming of 'actually existing socialism', that is those countries where marxism became a hegemonic discourse, was that it attempted to duplicate capitalist goals which both 'distorted socialism' and 'undermined the legitimacy of the system'. Dirlik eschews a marxist teleology, its economic determinism, and those forms of 'class analysis' which are blind to the complexities of social power. He argues that marxist teleology is no more capable of addressing the processes of 'fragmentation' brought on by 'Global Capitalism' than are the dominant modernization perspectives (pp 44, 81–82).

In a concise statement of the problem, Dirlik, argues that the 'challenge' is to mesh 'a non-totalizing discourse of liberation with a theoretical discourse that of necessity must address the problem of totality (however fragmented) under capitalism'. From his perspective, if any particular project of liberation, is going to be faithful to its goals, it can only concern itself with 'local propositions for general consideration' or 'general propositions for local consideration' and it must avoid either 'binding axioms formulated in accordance with teleological presuppositions', or 'the reification of local cultures' (pp 82, 84). At the same time, Dirlik emphasizes that 'Capital, more pervasive than ever within Global Capitalism, is very much a *foundational* principle of contemporary life' and '(a)ny discourse of liberation worthy of the name must address the problems of material and social existence that it presents'. In this context, marxism remains particularly relevant, and rather than signalling the 'death of marxism' the demise of state-socialism, from his point of view, 'frees Marxism from its servitude to bureaucratic modernizationism' (pp 105–106). Dirlik's argument implies that the relevance of marxism lies in part in its de-centring as a movement and as an intellectual tradition. In practice marxism was more diverse than many of its proponents and critics allowed and various currents have been as determined by their particular temporal and spatial context as they have been by marxist and socialist internationalism, something highlighted by Dirlik's analysis of Chinese marxism. Ultimately Dirlik proposes what he calls a *critical*

localism. He argues that the local is a key site of resistance against global power, but it must also be 'the site of negotiation for abolishing inequality and oppression inherited from the past, which is a condition of any promise it may have for the future'. This 'critical localism' must continue to evaluate the present from the perspective of the past, at the same time as it examines the past through the lens of modernity (including various forms of revisionist marxism). From this perspective Dirlik is highly critical of those decidedly uncritical localisms which include 'romantic nostalgias for communities past' as well as 'hegemonic nationalist yearnings of a new kind (as with the so-called Confucian revival in East Asia)' and 'historicisms that would imprison the present in the past' such as the wide variety of explicitly anti-modernist fundamentalist movements in many parts of the world (pp 108–109).

In a general sense, Dirlik's proposal of the need for a *critical localism* clearly meshes with Escobar's alternatives. Dirlik even foregrounds quotes from the work of Ashis Nandy and Vandana Shiva (whose politico-intellectual position is shared by Escobar) as part of his effort to map out alternatives.¹⁵ However, Escobar has little direct relationship to marxism, although his politico-economic analysis is derived from dependency theory and world-system theory which are usually seen as variants of marxism. Escobar points to, and positions himself with, various grass-roots efforts at resistance which emerged in the 1980s. He emphasizes that 'peasant resistance reflects more than the struggle for land and living conditions; it is above all a struggle over symbols and meanings, a cultural struggle' (pp 167–168)¹⁶. Near the end of his book, Escobar enlists the concept of hybridity in an effort to emphasize that the juggernaut of modernization does not eliminate *traditional cultures* which 'survive through their transformative engagement with modernity'. Although, hybridisation does not ordinarily undermine 'long-standing traditions of domination' he emphasizes that 'cultural hybridization' produces 'negotiated realities' informed by 'traditions, capitalism and modernity' (pp 217–221).¹⁷ Escobar emphasizes the need for anthropological research to investigate the articulation of alternatives. He argues that 'the nature of alternatives as a research question and a social practice can be most fruitfully gleaned from the specific manifestation of such alternatives in concrete local settings' insofar as the 'alternative is, in a sense, always there'. He argues that '(p)opular groups in many parts of the Third World' have increasingly sought to devise 'unprecedented visions' of both their world and themselves. In his view, their various perspectives centre on two general principles. First, the 'defense of cultural difference' as 'transforming' and 'transformative' rather than a static 'force'. Second, an emphasis on economic requirements and possibilities along vectors that are not determined primarily by the market. In more tactical terms, the common elements in the various grassroots alternatives being pursued include the need to defend the local as a basis from which to interact with the global; the articulation of a 'critique of the group's own situation, values and practices' in order to strengthen and clarify their identity; scepticism about and opposition to developmental modernization; and 'the formulation of visions and concrete proposals in the context of existing constraints' (pp 222–226, also see pp 94–95 and note 17, p 247).

The alternatives outlined by Escobar (and to a lesser extent by Dirlik) will strike many observers as romantic and utopian given the continued material and discursive power of capitalist modernization in its *Western, Eastern*, and various national, regional and local modes. Furthermore, Escobar's primary focus is on peasants still living in rural areas, even as he reaches for a global perspective on the making and unmaking of the *Third World*. Although his work is an important affirmation of the significance of local knowledge to post-development trajectories, it fails to capture the varieties of marginalization during the Cold War and into the post-Cold War era. Despite the ambitious title of the book, the diversity of the urban poor and *new* working classes, whose accommo-

dation and efforts at resistance are articulated through complex local, regional and global vectors, never emerges.¹⁸ As Escobar acknowledges, and Dirlik outlines in more detail, continued globalisation has ensured even greater diffusion of capitalism generating an overarching unity, but it has also resulted in fragmentation and differentiation exacerbating and reconfiguring social inequities. *New* underclasses and *new* labourers accommodate themselves to new flows of capital and new processes and/or resist them. While Escobar and Dirlik both emphasize the importance of local modes of political action and empowerment which mesh with the cultural and socio-economic concerns of particular groups and movements, their efforts to reach for relatively grand alternatives results in conclusions about resistance and post-development which are very general. The tendency, particularly in Escobar's case, to see local resistance as directed primarily at global power relations, results in an articulation of alternatives which overlooks the specificity of regional and national politics and the need in much of Latin America (to use a region which is the primary focus of Escobar's book, despite the title) and elsewhere, for local movements to engage in various kinds of 'strategic articulation with unions and political parties'.¹⁹

Conclusion

As emphasized at the outset, both these books under review represent important attempts to engage with the overwhelming material and discursive power of capitalist modernity and its destructive consequences. Unfortunately Escobar's failure to ground his analysis of the dominant development discourse in a discussion of the post-1945 historical political economy results in a relatively static conception of *Western* knowledge and power which overlooks the vicissitudes of the Cold War, the rise and fall of the state-socialist model and the industrialization of East-Asia. Dirlik provides a more satisfying analysis of global capitalism after 1945 (at the same time as he covers the pre-World War II era as well) which brings the Cold War, and its passing, into the picture. He also develops a critique of 'actually existing socialism' and looks at the rise of the East Asian *Miracle* and its implications for global power relations and the dominant discourse on development. Despite their critique of analytical formulations which rest on the notion of a *Third World*, both authors' continue to rely on the distinction between the First World and the Third World (North-South) which results in the homogenisation of diverse sites of accommodation and resistance. Although they attempt to map out alternative models and strategies which emphasize local perspectives and practices grounded in both *traditional* knowledge and modernist ideas and insights, these remain relatively general and, in Escobar's case in particular, may be somewhat utopian given a neglect of the regional and political context in which local efforts at resistance have to operate. Nevertheless, both books make an important contribution to a growing literature which argues that it is time for the people whose voices have for too long been silenced to find their own path to *development*.

Notes

Various discussions with Gerard Greenfield have contributed to the ideas expressed here. Of course, any errors of fact or interpretation are my responsibility.

¹⁸ M T Berger, 'Civilizing the South: the US rise to hegemony in the Americas and the roots of *Latin American Studies* 1898-1945', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 12(1), 1993. Also see M T Berger, *Under Northern Eyes: Latin American studies and US hegemony in the Americas 1898-1990*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995. On approaches to *development* in the tropical colonies of the British empire prior to 1945 see M Havinden and D Meredith, *Colonialism and Development: Britain and its tropical colonies 1850-1960*. London: Routledge, 1993.

- ² M Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: science technology and ideologies of western dominance*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989, pp 402–415.
- ³ US-policy makers continued to assume, well into the 1960s, that there was a direct causal link between poverty and communist revolution. R A Packenham, *Liberal America and the Third World: political development ideas in foreign aid and social science*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973, pp 52–53.
- ⁴ B Cumings, 'The Origins and Development of the Northeast Asian Political Economy: industrial sectors, product cycles and political consequences', *International Organization*, 38(1), 1984; reprinted in F C Deyo, (ed.), *The Political Economy of the New Asian Industrialism*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987. B. Cumings, 'Japan's Position in the World-System' in Andrew Gordon (ed.), *Postwar Japan as History*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.
- ⁵ D. Chirot, *Social Change in the Modern Era*, New York: Harcourt Brace and Jovanovich, 1986, pp 198–199.
- ⁶ R R Fagen, 'Studying Latin American Politics: some implications of a *Dependencia* approach', *Latin American Research Review*, 12(2), 1977, p. 4; Martin C Needler and Thomas W Walker linked the dramatic growth of Latin American studies in the 1960s to the rise of Castro, and the greater emphasis put on the region by the Kennedy administration. M C Needler and T W Walker, 'The Current Status of Latin American Studies Programs', *Latin American Research Review*, 6(1), 1971, pp 133–134. John J Johnson noted that following the rise of Castro 'there was a stampede of students into the field'. He described the funding and infrastructure for Latin American studies as being provided by 'Washington, in the interest of national security'; by 'the foundations, as they have tended to be, enamoured of the exotic; and the colleges and universities, to reaffirm their proclaimed dedication to public service'. J J Johnson, 'One Hundred Years of Historical Writing on Modern Latin America by United States Historians', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 65(4), 1985, pp 749–750.
- ⁷ J R Benjamin, 'The Framework of US Relations with Latin America in the Twentieth Century: an interpretive essay', *Diplomatic History*, 11(2), 1987, p 107. As Robert Packenham has argued, the Alliance for Progress represented one of 'the most sustained' and 'explicit' efforts to bring democracy to the *Third World*. According to Packenham, President Kennedy defined democracy as constitutional democracy, and was apparently convinced that 'economic and social progress' would dramatically increase the possibility of North American-style democracy taking root in Latin America. Packenham, *op cit*, pp 69–70.
- ⁸ The significance of the rise of East-Asia has also been overlooked by others writers attempting to come to grips with the global changes of the last few years. For example, Bryan S Turner has argued that the 'fall of communism and the rise of postmodernity' has meant 'that there is no significant political or economic alternative to organized socialism as the antagonist of Western capitalism, but it may be that this gap in the world system will be filled by either Islam or postmodernism', B S Turner, *Orientalism, Postmodernism and Globalism*, London: Routledge, 1994, p 11.
- ⁹ S R Gill, 'Neo-Liberalism and the Shift Towards a US-Centred Transnational Hegemony', in H Overbeek (ed.), *Restructuring Hegemony in the Global Political Economy: the rise of transnational neo-liberalism in the 1980s*, London: Routledge, 1993, pp 246–247, 280.
- ¹⁰ Globalization is being defined here as the growing array of world-wide processes of integration and differentiation which move people, information, capital, and goods across national boundaries linking and disrupting local and regional social formations and helping to throw up new social forms and patterns.
- ¹¹ M T Berger, 'The End of the Third World?', *Third World Quarterly*, 15(2), 1994.
- ¹² Escobar's analysis could have benefited from exposure to the work of an influential group of historical anthropologists whose work on Latin America has put an analysis of the specific at the center of an emphasis on regional, national and international power relations. For recent examples, see F Cooper, A F Isaacman, F E Mallon, W Rosebery and S J Stern, *Confronting Historical Paradigms: Peasants, labor, and the capitalist world system in Africa and Latin America*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993. Also see F E Mallon, 'The Promise and Dilemma of Subaltern Studies: perspectives from Latin American history', *American Historical Review*, 99(5), 1994. F E Mallon, *Peasant and Nation: the making of postcolonial Mexico and Peru*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.
- ¹³ As Appadurai notes, the 'dynamics of such indigenization have just begun to be explored systematically'; however, 'it is worth noticing that for the people of Irian Jaya, Indonesianization may be more worrisome than (North) Americanization, as Japanization may be for Koreans—Vietnamization for the Cambodians', and so on. A Appadurai, 'Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy', *Public Culture, Bulletin of the Project for Transnational Cultural Studies*, 2(2), 1990, pp 4–6.
- ¹⁴ M T Berger, 'Indonesia in the New World Disorder: colonial history, nationalist visions and global capitalism' in M T Berger and D A Borer (eds), *Pacific Visions: the rise of the east and the end of the Cold War in the Asia-Pacific*, forthcoming. Also see, for example, Carol Warren, Adat and Dinas: *Balinese Communities in the Indonesian state*, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford, 1993. Thomas Gibson, 'Ritual and Revolution: contesting the state in central Indonesia', *Social Analysis: Journal of Cultural and Social Practice*, 35, 1994.
- ¹⁵ Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: loss and recovery of self under colonialism*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983. Vandana Shiva, *Staying Alive: women, ecology and development*, London: Zed Press, 1989.
- ¹⁶ One of Escobar's examples of grassroots resistance is the Proyecto Andino de Tecnologías Campesinas (PRATEC) which emphasizes the importance of local knowledge. While activists associated with PRATEC

acknowledge that knowledge and practice particular to the Andes have broken down, they 'emphatically' point to the continued 'validity' of a number of well-established rural practices. Furthermore, they emphasize that peasants have appropriated various aspects of modernity at the same time as they have retained their particular 'vision of the world'. This group of Peruvian activists and intellectuals have called for a social 'restructuring' of Peru based on 'repeasantization' and 'anti-imperialism', as well as a type of 'pan-Andean heterogenous re-ethnicization' (pp 168–170).

¹⁷ Significantly, the term hybrid first gained currency in late nineteenth century Europe as a biological or physiological term for the offspring of parents of different *races*. As Robert Young has noted the current appropriation of the term by critical theory to problematize fixed notions of identity and continued assertions of cultural/racial purity suggests that contemporary critical theory may not have transcended the racial concepts of an earlier era as much as it is sometimes assumed. Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: hybridity in theory, culture and race*, London: Routledge, 1995, pp 6, 10, 27–28.

¹⁸ Nor is the historic and contemporary flow of migrant labor across national boundaries drawn into the picture by Escobar, although it does figure somewhat more substantially in Dirlik's analysis. A marked example of a new and reconfigured *proletarian diaspora* are the Filipino migrant workers who have fanned out across the Asia-Pacific and beyond in the past few decades. The Philippines has emerged as the most significant national 'exporter' of labour in the world, while overseas remittances represent the Philippine state's largest single source of foreign exchange. At the same time as migrant Filipino labour makes an important contribution to the economic and social life of the Philippines, their work, particularly as domestics and in the service-sector, is crucial to the life-styles of the *new rich* in East Asia (Singapore and Hong Kong are two important foci of migrant Filipino labour) and beyond making a major, although often unacknowledged, contribution to East Asia's dynamic image. J Karp, 'A New Kind of Hero', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 30 March 1995, pp 42–45. G Silverman, 'Mothers to the World', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 30 March 1995, p 48.

¹⁹ C Vilas, 'Forward Back: capitalist restructuring, the state and the working class in Latin America', B Magnus and S Cullenberg (eds), *Whither Marxism? global crises in international perspective*, London: Routledge, 1995, p 143.

The revenge of society? Religious responses to political disequilibrium in Africa

Jeff Haynes

The Political Dimensions of Religion

edited by Said Amir Arjomand

Albany, NY, USA: State University of New York Press, 1993

pp 293, pb £16, hb £48

Religion and Politics in East Africa. The Period since Independence

edited by Holger Bernt Hansen & Michael Twaddle

London, Nairobi, Kampala, Athens: James Currey, EAEP, Fountain Publishers, Ohio University Press, 1995

pp 278, pb £12.95, hb £35

Religion and Politics in Nigeria. A Study in Middle Belt Christianity

Niels Kastfelt

London: British Academic Press, 1994

pp 204, hb £35

A History of the Quaker Movement in Africa

Ane Marie Bak Rasmussen

London: British Academic Press, 1995

pp 168, hb £34.50

Self Esteem, State, Islam, and Mundang Ethnicity in Northern Cameroon

Kees Schilder

pp 283, Aldershot, UK: Avebury, African Studies Centre, Leiden, 1994

Islamic Society and State Power in Senegal. Disciples and Citizens in Fatick

Leonardo A. Villalón

pp 338, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995

Analysis of politics in contemporary Africa is often contextualised by questions which arise from the more or less fundamental division between state and society in many countries of the region. States seek—and usually fail to attain—a comprehensive penetration of society. It is the state's inability to penetrate society fully which demonstrates its weakness or *softness* in most African national contexts. Many African citizens, disaffected and disillusioned by the falsity of developmental promises and by the arbitrariness of modes of rule since independence in the 1960s, take their *revenge*, in Bayart's terminology, on the state in a number of ways.¹ Distrust of the state extends, in many cases, to suspicion regarding the desirability or usefulness of political institutions *per se*. As a result, independent political parties, when they exist, are frequently shunned or ignored; tax collection is evaded; state-run development programmes are ridiculed. This is not to claim that many ordinary Africans do not seek to *use* the state and its resources when they can for material gain; but it is to note that the African state, for the most part, functions without the support and trust of a significant proportion of its citizens.

Religion, modernisation and society in Africa

In the absence of high levels of regard for the state, many Africans put their trust in different forms of authority, especially in an array of religious vehicles. It is a truism to note that religion's current importance in politics in many parts of the world is substantial, and, according to many accounts, growing in importance. We should recall, however, that this is a very recently established piece of conventional wisdom. Until recently, i.e. until the Iranian revolution of 1979, it was widely believed that *all* societies, except the unredeemably communist-orientated, would secularise as they modernised and industrialised. In this process of apparently inexorable secularisation, the best that could be managed by religious professionals was to 'go with the flow' and seek to salvage something from the fundamental culture shift.

The sentiments expressed in Harvey Cox's book *The Secular City*, published in 1965, were typical. Cox argued that theologians were fighting a losing battle in trying to swim against the tide of secularisation accompanying the swift growth of urbanisation and industrialisation in many areas of the world. Perhaps their best chance of retaining popular relevance and hence societal significance was to seek to influence the burgeoning secular movements of social change. One practical result of the melding of spiritual and political concerns was the involvement of many socially progressive theologians in the neo-Marxist-influenced liberation theology movements which subsequently emerged in parts of the Third World, including South Africa, the Philippines and several Latin America countries.

Thirty years after the publication of *The Secular City*, it is no longer even slightly controversial to claim widespread links between religion and politics in the contemporary world. Since the Iranian revolution attention has focused in Third World contexts upon, *inter alia*: general Islamic militancy; the political and social impact of Christian fundamentalism and the rapid growth of politically quietist Protestant evangelical sects in Latin America and parts of East Asia, especially South Korea; and Hindu-Muslim conflict in India.

Yet, despite substantial evidence of an important political role for religion in many parts of the world, the nature and characteristics of the interaction between religion and politics still poses problems for political science. The main issue is: how to analyse the phenomenon when until recently the consensus was that secularisation and modernisation would inexorably displace religion from people's concerns? Even the most implacably materialist strand of analysis, neo-Marxist thought, eventually came to recognise that politics was not merely concerned with economic structures and processes, but also with attitudes and values formed in part by religious or wider cultural considerations.² In other words, class analysis became no longer a defensible form of political analysis without concern with other, non-materialist issues. For their part, proponents of rational choice theory were also obliged to amend their analytical frameworks; it was necessary, henceforward, to break out of what Almond calls the 'reductionist microrational quandary' by admitting that rational self-interest models must be set in a multifaceted context involving laws, rules, ideas, religious beliefs and cultural values, in order to enhance existing explanatory models.³

Paralleling the renaissance of religion's political role over the last two decades is the more or less global process of modernisation. Modernisation, contingent upon urbanisation and industrialisation and effected as both a process and an ideology, presents individuals with the chance to leave behind old relations and construct new ones. The state in independent Africa was unequivocally the vehicle of modernisation; political elites, embedded at the head of the new post-colonial countries would lead the drive to change and modernisation. Yet, this process turned out to be fragmentary, partial and inconclusive. An important issue in relation to how we understand the renaissance of religion's role in Africa's politics is that of the effects of failed modernisation. Many Africans may well understand the effects of poor rule as inseparable from the consequences of failed modernisation. In fact, bungled attempts to modernise have been the root cause of crisis for many Africans; yet they have not been passive in the face of adversity. It was believed by many political scientists that social change leading to modernisation would result in a jettisoning of older, traditional values and the adoption of other, initially alien, actually more *rational*, social and political practices. In many respects, however, the adoption of Western traits in many African countries is often only skin deep: at the personal level, Western-style suits for men rather than traditional dress and skin lightening cream for women; at the level of symbols of national unity, the trappings of statehood—flag, constitution, legislature, etc.; at the level of social intercourse, a European *lingua franca*, and so on. Yet, change as a result of modernisation is not uniform throughout African societies; ethnic and religious conflicts are frequent as a result of the patchy, partial adoption of modern practices which co-exist with 'traditional' (i.e. pre-modern) ways of doing things. Social change destabilises, creating a dichotomy between those who benefit from change and those who do not. New social strata arise whose position in the new order is decidedly ambiguous, such as the twentieth century phenomenon of rural-urban migrants in Africa who find themselves between two worlds, often without an effective or appropriate set of anchoring values. Such people will be likely to join millenarian or utopian religious groups, i.e. organisations which promise something that the state has been unable to deliver during a time of massive social change: a feeling of community, spiritual satisfaction, and a sense of belonging.

Moyser poses two important analytical questions which relate to ways in which religion and politics relate to each other in the contemporary world.⁴ First, to what extent are religious orientations linked to a national political culture and/or given subcultures? Second, are religious belief systems, such as they are at the mass level systematically associated with ideological dispositions in the political realm? He makes the point that in a large number of both 'developed' and 'developing' countries, religious

and politics do seem to 'connect' in this way. There are, for example, often discernible links between religion and nationalism (or ethnicity) and those linking religious 'fundamentalism' and political conservatism.

Analysis of religion and politics in Africa

The books under review each attempt to explore the nature of the relationship involving religion and politics over the last few decades; five deal exclusively with Africa, while the sixth, Arjomand's edited volume, seeks to develop a global focus; one of the 11 chapters of his book, however, is concerned with Africa: Karen E. Fields' interesting contribution on millenarian sects in Central Africa during the colonial period. In some respects Arjomand's is the least satisfactory of the books discussed here; and that is not because of its wide geographical scope. The problem is that the volume lacks a sufficiently robust analytical framework to do justice to the contributions, some of which are both interesting and informative. The reason for the lack of a solid explanatory structure, I suspect, is that the contributions were originally conference papers for a thematic session at the American Sociological Association (ASA) annual convention on 'religion and politics' in 1990. The enduring problem of how to make the 'book of the conference panel' coherent is especially prevalent when one has papers on a large number of themes: how does one make a coherent whole of an often staggering diversity? It is a challenge that is not fully met in Arjomand's book.

For the purposes of this review article, however, the book is useful in another, slightly negative, way: it demonstrates how far and fast the study of religion and politics has advanced in the five years since Arjomand's 'thematic session' at the ASA in August 1990. Yet, while literally dozens of books have appeared on the general theme of 'religion and politics' over the last few years it is probably fair to claim that the study of the interaction between the two has been less developed in the context of Africa than in some other Third World regions, especially Latin America and the predominantly Muslim countries of the Middle East and North Africa.

As the books under review which deal with Africa make clear part of the analytical problem involving religion and politics in the region is the astonishing multifariousness of religious beliefs, ethnic divisions, cultural distinctions, and political modes to be found there. To try to make sense out of the complexity is inevitably to simplify. As Twaddle notes in *Religion and Politics in East Africa*, 'some scholars might consider that even one African country forms too broad a remit [for analysis]. Only more detailed and locally focused studies bring true wisdom' (p. 2). Now I am not sure that any of us would develop 'true wisdom'—surely a divine trait—by concentrating on a local context rather than an entire country or region. If we are to develop robustly comparative modes of analysis it is necessary to take the plunge and compare like with like as far as possible across political boundaries. Twaddle fears that the cross-border approach may lead to 'hubris, superficiality and mere listing of surface characteristics' (p. 2). But this concern, if pursued to its logical conclusion, would preclude *any* comparative political analysis. I do not share Twaddle's perhaps over-developed fear of comparative analysis. But I do see what he is getting at; the task is to strike an appropriate balance between, on the one hand, too much concern with apparently banal, shallow traits of religious groups while, on the other, not daring to try to discover similarities at all.

Bernt Hansen and Twaddle's book is the third in a very successful and illuminating series which focuses on Uganda's painfully slow rehabilitation after the Amin period and the civil war which followed. Interestingly, however, *Religion and Politics in East Africa*, eschews the country-focused approach in order to introduce a wide element of comparability. In addition to Uganda, chapters also deal with Kenya and Sudan in some depth and Tanzania and Zaire more superficially.

The general issue of religion and politics in Africa, like elsewhere in the Third World, is impossible to analyse satisfactorily without recognising the impact of European colonialism. The late Ane Marie Bak Rasmussen's book, *A History of the Quaker Movement in Africa*, is a detailed, exhaustive account of the growth of the Quaker movement in Africa. She details how the movement, initially founded in Britain as a millenarian fellowship in the mid-17th century in the wake of the English civil war, spread to East Africa during the colonial period. In 1973, however, the Quaker movement in Kenya split into two for reasons connected more with ethnic suspicion and the desires of putative leaders to hold sway over their own community domains, than because of basic theological or spiritual divisions between the religious leaders. As Kathleen Staudt notes in her conclusion, necessary because the author, Rasmussen, died in late 1992 before completion of her monograph, the book is a highly interesting analysis not only of 'how Africans gradually assumed control of their Church' (p. 155), but also of how and why religious bodies divide with such regularity into new churches in the region.

Like Rasmussen's volume, Kastfelt's book, *Religion and Politics in Nigeria. A Study in Middle Belt Christianity* explores the interaction of Christianity and politics in a discrete area of Africa, in this case Nigeria. As with Rasmussen's account Kastfelt's book, commendably exhaustive in its historical analysis, explains how certain Christian churches in Nigeria were gradually prised from the grip of Europeans becoming, in the process, definitively African: developing into religious bodies adapted to, and influenced by, local politics and social interactions.

Turning to Schilder's book, *Self-Esteem. State, Islam, and Mundang ethnicity in northern Cameroon*, we are faced with the problem of doing justice in a short review article to the vast array of material which Schilder marshals in a revised version of his PhD thesis. The book, written from an anthropological standpoint, is broadly concerned with the relationship between ethnicity, culture, history and politics among the Mundang people of northern Cameroon. The study emphasises the ambivalence of ethnicity. People of the Mundang group have not only been very responsive to outside influences—especially Islam—but, at the same time have preserved a strong sense of their ethnic identity. Schilder interprets this seeming paradox in terms of a quest for self-esteem of a small ethnic group—the Mandung—in the periphery of the dominant Islamic world of Fulbe/Hausa society in Central-West Africa.

The final book under review is Leonardo A. Villalón's *Islamic Society and State Power in Senegal*. Villalón's exhaustively researched book is a very important and timely contribution to the debate about the relationship between state and society in Africa. The core of his thesis is that in Senegal the omnipresent Sufi Muslim orders, rather than acting as a force to destabilise the state-society relationship, are actually the central component of a political system that is one of the most stable in Africa. Based on 18 months' fieldwork in Senegal in the early 1990s, Villalón's book explores, on the one hand, the relationship between grassroots politics and the state while, on the other, it examines the impact of both national and international forces to suggest ways in which the internal dynamics of the Sufi orders shape the exercise of power by the Senegalese state.

Senegal is one of the few African countries where it is appropriate to tie religious orientations to a national political culture. Over 90 per cent of Senegalese are Muslims; most of them belong to one of the Sufi sects; very many live in rural areas where the influence of the *marabouts*, i.e. Muslim 'holy men', is high. This is largely because many ordinary people believe that their *marabout* is an essential interlocutor between them and the state; in effect, the *marabout* mediates between them and the state in order to protect them from the power of the latter which they fear. Yet, not many African

states are as coherent, relatively stable, and authoritative as Senegal's. This is not to suggest that there is a lack of dynamism in the relationship between state and society in Senegal; in fact, the contrary would be true. Located in West Africa in the border zone between the Arab, Islamic north and the multi-religion, non-Arab, sub-Saharan area the state is both threatened and advantaged by international factors.

Membership of the Islamic Conference Organisation and the overwhelmingly Muslim character of the country's population give Senegal an advantage in its relations with the countries of the Muslim heartland, the Middle East. Yet, as Villalón indicates, this is a double-edged sword, allowing Senegal to be at least potentially easily infiltrated by the militant brands of Islam common there. Yet, Islamic militancy in the sense of a desire to build an 'Islamic state' is virtually absent in Senegal. It is the case that the equanimity of the Senegalese state, dominated since independence by the Parti Socialiste (PS), was shaken recently by widespread popular resentment at economic hardship, reflected in a falling (although still substantial) proportion of the votes for the PS at the most recent national elections in 1993. Yet, the ruling regime has *never* lost power in an election since independence in 1964, despite the existence of viable opposition parties; its ability to mollify and strike deals with the leading Sufi brotherhoods, especially the Muridiyya, is a large part of the reason why.

The genesis of the power of the Sufi brotherhoods as they relate to the state, as Villalón describes, began during the colonial period. In the early days of French rule, i.e. in the first decade of the twentieth century, *marabouts* often sought to build messianic communities, to create counter-societies, away from the control of the Christian French colonial administration. Eventually, however, most *marabouts* forged a *modus vivendi* with the French leading to mutual benefits: economic rewards and social cohesion for the *marabouts*, political consensus and quiescence in colonial rule for the French. During the period of colonialism, and extending into the post-independence period, the *marabouts'* social control developed into an apparatus which exercised high levels of influence over many ordinary people.

The alliance between the *marabouts* and the state is virtually consubstantial with Senegalese society, except in the region of the Casamance, separated from the rest of the country by The Gambia, where Christians and Muslims reside in rough equality of numbers. The *marabouts* function as political intermediaries, shielding their peasant clients from the more onerous of state demands—even taxes in some places—while depending on the state for the resources necessary to build up their clientelistic networks. In other words, *marabouts* in Senegal exemplify the role of intermediary between state and subordinate classes. The *marabouts* embody a stratum of *courtiers politiques* engaged in permanent negotiations of dependence and authority between their patron state and their largely peasant clientele. In a period of normalcy or limited crisis, they will collaborate with the state openly. During periods of serious economic dislocation, however, they may be openly critical of the regime; in short, they will attempt to reject the state's influence when necessary, although there has never—so far—been a fundamental excision.

While the economic position of the brotherhood's leaders remains relatively buoyant, militant Islam—a putative mould breaker—did surface in Senegal in 1979, the year of Iran's successful revolution. A member of a famous religious family, Abdullah 'Khalifa' Niass, attempted to follow the example of Iran's revolution practically single-handedly by declaring Senegal an 'Islamic state'. He nevertheless found that neither his call to *jihād* nor his Iranian-backed, party, Hizboulahi (*Party of God*), was regarded with favour by many ordinary Senegalese, while his own personal standing was fatally undermined by allegations of financial corruption. Ostracised by his family and with only minimal popular support, Niass was imprisoned in 1981. Other, similarly unsuccessful radical

Islamic initiatives, also deriving inspiration from the Iranian revolutionary example, include two newspapers, *Wal Fidi* (*The Dawn*) and *Djamra* (*Islamic review*). Both campaigned—unsuccessfully—against the concept and practice of Senegal's secular state.

Such developments suggest at least a *potentially* mould-breaking realignment in Senegal, feeding off an increase in societal resentment at high prices, a lack of economic opportunities and a simple political fatigue occasioned by being ruled by the same regime for more than 30 years. In recent times, as Villalón discusses at length, there have also been signs of a surely connected decline in the strength of the *marabouts'* political position vis-à-vis society. Nevertheless, in the most recent presidential elections in February 1993, President Diouf, whether through force of habit or something else, was 'able to mobilise voters in rural areas, and this time without the express instructions' (i.e. the *ndiguel* [instruction]) from the most powerful *marabouts* (*West Africa* 22–28 March 1993: 455). This suggests that the *marabouts'* hold on their rural followers may be diminishing although the conservatism of many rural voters perhaps persuaded them to vote for Diouf again.

In the legislative elections which followed in May 1993, Diouf's Parti Socialiste (PS) won 70 of the 120 seats (58 per cent), a good result but by no means an overwhelming one. Diouf's chief rival, Abdoullahi Wade's Parti Démocratique Sénégalais (PDS) gained 40 seats, and four others achieved 10 between them. Once again the *ndiguel* was conspicuous by its absence. Formerly, the Khalifa-General of the powerful Muridiyya brotherhood publicly backed the PS; on this occasion he did not. In the past, the bond between *marabouts* and their disciples, which had the effect of binding the latter to the former unconditionally was, no doubt, worth thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of votes for PS candidates.

Many Muridiyya disciples draw a distinction between two categories of instruction from their chief: there are, in effect, two sorts of *ndiguel*: First, there is the electoral instruction to vote for the government which could be disobeyed by the disciple with relative impunity it appears; second, there is the *ndiguel*, for the good of the brotherhood, which retains its customarily authoritative character. In 1993 there was no 'electoral' *ndiguel*, as the *marabouts* ran the risk of provoking the desertion of their disciples, should they attempt to push them too hard into voting for Diouf and the PS. The silence of the Muridiyya leader was, no doubt, connected to the poor economic conditions of the time. It would have hardly enhanced his reputation among his followers to endorse a government and leader which many believed was failing to rule wisely or well. Economic considerations were of importance in popular perceptions of the regime. Traditionally, the Muridiyya chiefs control groundnut production. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the guaranteed price paid by the state for groundnuts fell considerably.

Despite the possibility that the tight state-*marabout*-disciple relationship is beginning to fracture as a result of Senegal's economic travails the country remains an unusual example in Africa whereby expression of the state's power and authority is dependent on the loyalty of a class of intermediaries. In effect, the national political culture of Senegal, where religious actors play such an important political role, is unique in Africa below the Sahara. In no other country in the region is the state-society relationship mediated by a class of religio-political actors. Much more common is a situation characteristic of both Nigeria and Sudan where no national political culture can easily be identified and where conflict between religious and ethnic groups largely defines political interaction.

In the case of Sudan, simmering conflict between the north and south of the country emerged following independence in 1956, to be followed by intermittent civil war from the early 1970s. The current position seems to be one of impasse: the Arab north

cannot subdue the non-Arab, mostly non-Muslim south, neither can the latter force the former to the negotiating table to seek an end to the conflict, nor can it win militarily. As in Senegal, international factors impinge: both Saudi Arabia and latterly Iran have sought to gain foreign policy goals in Sudan by supporting the government side against the rebels in the south. Yet, the war is by no means a religious war, one which poses northern Muslims against southern Christians: things are rather more complex than that. Few southerners are Christians; not all northerners are Muslims. Neither side is united against the other. The real issue, as R. S. O'Fahey makes clear in his contribution to *Religion and Politics in East Africa*, is that of attempted arabisation of the country by an authoritarian, Islamic regime which underlines its religious concerns so as to attract foreign financial aid and to have a ready made legal code—*Sharia* law—which it finds useful for reasons of social control.

The situation in Nigeria is quite different. As Kastfelt avers, there is no absolute north-south divide which conveniently encapsulates cultural or religious divisions in the country. Muslims and Christians are by no means self-defining communities with clearcut geographical centres of influence. Other factors, including region, ethnicity, and language, crosscut religious divisions. One of the major ethnic groups of Nigeria, the Yoruba, are almost equally divided between followers of Islam and devotees of Christianity, while some still retain allegiance to traditional religions. Yet, as Kastfelt notes, not only in the late colonial period but also more recently, many of the long-running political tensions in the country are associated in many ordinary people's minds with religious concerns, broadly the Christian-Muslim divide. As in Sudan, the conflict has been fanned by foreign interests: on the Muslim side, Saudi Arabia, Libya, and Iran; supporting the Christians are foreign fundamentalists from North America and Europe.

Yet, foreign interests only encourage conflict; they do not precipitate it. Religion is used as a symbol, an emblem of societal disquiet which is a result of the traumatic events of Nigeria's chequered political history. While the civil war was by no means portrayed as a religious war at the time, the tensions which helped to produce it, recently exacerbated by the rise and fall of oil revenues as a putative panacea for Nigeria's development conundrum, have reappeared in a religious form. The millenarian radical Islam of the Maitatsine, Muhammad Marwa, which led to thousands of deaths in the country between 1979–85 was not simply an outbreak of 'Islamic fundamentalism', but rather an eruption of the 'have nots' against the 'haves'. More recent conflict between Muslims and Christians, leading to hundreds of deaths since the mid-1980s, also has an important material *raison d'être*: as living conditions decline rapidly in the country the reaction, increasingly couched in religious terms, is not only to call upon God for redemption but also to target those religious rivals deemed responsible for the country's woes.

In sum, the extent to which religious orientations are linked to a national political culture and/or given subcultures seems to depend on a variety of factors, of which two are the most important: first, the degree to which politicians are able to exploit them for personal gain and, second, the degree of popular allegiance to a feeling of community 'separateness' embedded in religious, ethnic or wider cultural concerns. From the evidence presented by the books under review there does not seem to be much correlation between religious belief systems and ideological dispositions in the political realm, particularly putative connections between religion and nationalism and between 'fundamentalism' and political conservatism. In relation to religious *fundamentalism* (an inherently unsatisfactory term yet one which has gained a certain currency by dint of repetition) there are few discernible links between the mainstream religious beliefs of many, probably most ordinary Africans, and the virulent brand of radical conservatism

that most would identify as one of the main traits of most varieties of religious 'fundamentalism'. In other words, the relative absence of identifiable religious fundamentalism in most of Sub-Saharan Africa, excepting Sudan, when compared to other regions, such as the Middle East, underlines the distinctiveness of the structure and process of politics in black Africa.

In relation to the religion-nationalism question, the books collectively underline, especially Schilder's erudite tome, that one of the chief characteristics of contemporary Africa is the very absence of nationalist feeling among ordinary people, many of whom retain fundamental allegiance to their ethnic, religious or wider cultural group.

Conclusion: The Revenge of Society?

The issues raised in the books under review are highly important to studies of politics and religion in Africa. They include the relationship of the state to religious organisations and the question of national orientation, the appeal of religious actors as political protagonists or as intermediaries between citizen and regime, and the impact of religious 'fundamentalism' on national politics. Each of the books highlights in various ways how the past few decades have been periods of great social, political and economic upheaval in Africa. As the volumes discussed here underline, Africa is marked by a high degree of political and religious heterogeneity which makes a study of politics and religion in the region complex but rewarding.

In general, the books combine in their different ways and with their regional or country-level concerns, to advance significantly our understanding of the relationship between politics and religion in Africa. It is, however, important to locate recent trends in Africa not only in local contexts but also within an emerging global pattern. Over the last 20 years or so religion has had considerable impact upon politics in many regions of the world. Confidence that the growth and spread of urbanisation, education, economic development, scientific rationality and social mobility would combine to diminish significantly the socio-political position of religion was not well founded. Religion in Africa is often used as a vehicle of community opposition to 'outsider' groups, as in Nigeria and Sudan; sometimes it serves as a social cement, as in Senegal, to fuse state-society relations. Furthermore, unwelcome symptoms of modernisation (such as breakdown of moral behaviour, perceived over-liberalisation in education and social habits) serve to galvanise popular religious reactions which connect to the perceived failure of governments to push through their programmes of social improvement.

The developments described above in relation to Africa suggest a conclusion with wider applicability: one of the most resilient ideas about societal development after World War II—that nations would inevitably secularise as they modernised—was misplaced. Loss of religious faith and secularisation dovetailed with the idea that technological development and the application of science to overcome perennial social problems of poverty, environmental degradation, hunger, and disease would result in long term human progress. What became clear was that technological development and other aspects of modernisation left many people with a feeling of loss rather than achievement. In the event, society's revenge against the state was heavily religion-orientated. As the books under review highlight: we need new analytical models and paradigms to understand what is happening not only in Africa but in the Third World more generally. The collective contribution of these books is to start the process.

Notes

¹ J-F Bayart, *The State in Africa*, London: Longman 1993.

² G Almond, 'Foreword: The Return to Political Culture', in L Diamond (ed.), *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries*, Lynne Rienner: Boulder and London, 1993, p xi.

³ Almond, *Foreword*, p xi.

⁴ G Moyser, 'Politics and Religion in the Modern World: an overview', in Moyser (ed.), *Politics and Religion in the Modern World*, Routledge: London, 1991, p 8.

Analysing anarchic Afghanistan

Ahmed Rashid

Out of Afghanistan. The Inside Story of the Soviet Withdrawal

Diego Cordovez & Selig Harrison

New York: Oxford University Press, 1995

pp 450, £27.50 hb

The Fragmentation of Afghanistan. State Formation and Collapse in the International System

Rubin Barnett

Yale University Press, 1995

pp 378, £24 hb

Fifteen years after Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan, the country remains at war. The Afghan state has collapsed, the economy runs on heroin, and kalnishkovs determine political power. More than one million people died during the Mujheddin resistance to the Soviet occupation, but an equally bloody death toll of more than 100,000 people, has been the result of the fratricidal civil war that erupted after the Mujheddin captured Kabul in 1992. There is no end in sight and very little concern within the international community about the long term consequences of the war.

These two new books on Afghanistan predict a future that is as grim as the past. However, in both areas which they cover, are definitive works of great authority and wisdom, uncovering the wrong turnings taken in the past by all the major players. The first is an insider account of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, written jointly by the former UN Special Representative to Afghanistan Diego Cordovez, who negotiated the epoch-making deal that began the unravelling of the Soviet Union, and renowned American journalist and academic Selig Harrison, who has followed events in the region for the past 30 years.

Meanwhile, the American scholar Barnett Rubin has written a landmark study of Afghan society at war. Rubin's awesomely reflective tone, his years of research and serious scholarship, turns his analysis into a study of the collapse of the nation state in the post-Cold War era. His study is as much about today's Yugoslavia or Africa as it is about Afghanistan.

The outstanding feature of the first book, in the chapters written by Harrison, is the high drama and power struggle in Moscow as President Mikhail Gorbachov pushed his own military, the communist party and a reluctant Afghan government, to comply with his aim to pull out the Soviet forces. Equally, the blind addiction of President Reagan's policy makers to the Cold War, made them unwilling to believe that the Soviets were honest about their intentions or foresee the looming catastrophe in Moscow. Harrison's research, interviews and insights into the minds of Moscow and Washington are the most

powerful chronology of the beginning of the end of the Cold War, ever written to date, including the acclaimed book by Strobe Talbott and Michael Beschloss, *At the Highest Level. The Inside Story of the End of the Cold War*, published in 1993.

Cordovez's contribution depicts the super power and regional rivalry over Afghanistan that continues to this day. His essay on the failure of the second track—to form a coalition government in Kabul in 1989 after the Soviet withdrawal—is intuitive of the future and today's bloody mess in Afghanistan. With Pakistan unwilling to adjust to the new realities of the approaching post-Cold War era and determined to install a fundamentalist government in Kabul, the Mujheddin fractious and divided as ever, and the US keen to extract revenge from Moscow on their earlier retreat from Vietnam, Cordovez's heroic efforts were constantly thwarted.

No book on the period has delineated so skilfully the critical linkages between the four capitals, Moscow, Washington, Kabul and Islamabad. In the tortuous UN negotiations, each side, despite their public animosity, were heavily dependent on the other for concessions, initiatives and even trying to influence each other's domestic politics. Hawks in the four capitals appeared to have the same agenda and even collaborated with each other to thwart the UN peace process, as doves in each capital helped the UN.

Thus Pakistan did not learn any lessons from Moscow's inability to control the bitter fighting between Parcham and Khalq—which formed the communist government—in Kabul. General Zia ul Haq and his Interservices Intelligence (ISI) believed that they could manipulate the Mujheddin to their will, even as they crushed all other Afghan attempts to forge a more credible, effective and representative alternative to the Kabul regime. Doves in both Moscow and Islamabad attempted to modify these hardline policies.

Harrison describes in detail how the ISI deliberately undermined an attempt by Afghan tribal leaders to form a Loya Jirga (tribal council) in 1980, as the ISI gave its full backing to the fundamentalist Mujheddin. When the Jirga met outside Peshawar in May 1980, 916 Afghan delegates from all Afghanistan's provinces attended. This was probably the largest and most representative meeting ever held by the Afghans in 15 years of war, but it was not allowed to succeed.

There are many fascinating revelations. The authors describe in detail the 1983 opportunity when the Russians appeared ready to withdraw their troops, but the US and Pakistan back-pedalled on earlier commitments to Moscow. Russian diplomats told Cordovez as early as 1985 during a walk in the park in Geneva, that Gorbachev is determined to withdraw his troops. When Cordovez conveyed this to Washington and Islamabad nobody wanted to believe him. The regime of General Zia ul Haq was already obsessed with its desire for "Pan-Islamism and the strategic realignment of South Asia", and willing to side with the CIA chief William Casey's assessment that the Soviets were bluffing. Afghanistan had also become Zia's passport to international credibility and he was in no hurry to see the Russians leave.

Hawks in both capitals used their most senior diplomats as 'window dressing' for expressing peaceful intentions, while the CIA and the ISI carried out the real business of killing Russians. 'The basic issue that divided me and my colleagues during this period was whether the Russians were serious about leaving. I believe they were, even in 1983. The ISI and Casey, felt strongly they were not,' says Pakistan's former Foreign Minister Yaqub Khan.

The book also lays to rest the much quoted CIA-ISI assumption that the supply of US-made Stinger missiles to the Mujheddin in 1986, forced Gorbachev to withdraw his troops. In fact the Russian leadership had indicated its intentions to quit one year earlier. The Russians had removed Afghan President Babrak Karmal in May 1986, in a bid to broaden the Afghan government's base through the new President Najibullah, in what

was an expected post-withdrawal scenario. But the Stingers lengthened the war by giving the hawks in Moscow and Kabul greater justification to prolong the Soviet presence in Afghanistan.

Cordovez writes in detail of the eleven rounds of the UN-sponsored Geneva talks, which started in 1982 and culminated in 1988 with the signing of the Geneva Accords. He sheds considerable light on key sticking points such as the timetable for the withdrawal of troops that was whittled down from 4 years to a few months, the controversy over the Durrand Line, which the Afghan delegation constantly used as a blocking process both with Pakistan and with its masters in Moscow, when they were pressurised by the Soviets, and of course the convoluted negotiations over the second track.

Cordovez's last chapter is weak because he fluffs over the end of his mission and his dismissal from his post, as a conspiracy by 'sycophants' close to the UN Secretary General. The facts are otherwise. Cordovez had already accepted the job of becoming the Foreign Minister of his home country Ecuador and for him to expect to pursue two careers was unrealistic. Moreover, despite his brilliant diplomatic inventiveness, his penchant for publicity, his enormous ego and conviction that he was always right had antagonised many at the UN and foreign diplomats he was dealing with, especially in Pakistan and amongst the Mujheddin.

Cordovez does not even mention his self-appointed successor Benon Sevan, who came close to achieving the second track aim of a coalition government. Sevan's lack of success was largely due to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the ISI's unwillingness to accept a coalition government in 1992—almost exactly the same problems that Cordovez faced in 1989.

At the end, Cordovez says he believes that if Zia had lived, he would have persuaded the Mujheddin to go along with a coalition with the communists. In fact Zia had dismissed his Prime Minister, Mohammed Khan Junejo, precisely because he was opposed to such a solution and was determined to install the Mujheddin in Kabul at whatever cost to Pakistan. Nevertheless there is little doubt that a run-of-the-mill UN bureaucrat without Cordovez's abilities, intelligence and unstoppable diplomatic creativity would have been unable to achieve the final signing of the Geneva Accords.

The reality that Barnett Rubin describes so movingly in his opening chapter called 'Afghanistan—Mirror of the World', sums up the evils of the post-Cold War world. "The security of some and the insecurity of others, our modernity and their tradition are parts of a simultaneous, linked, fragmented world ... the fragmenting countries show the integrating ones the dark side of their common present. "If you do not like the image in the mirror", says an old Persian poem, "do not break the mirror, break your face".

Rubin expands his mirror image to outline the inherent tension of state building in a tribal society and how, whether it was amongst the Afghan communists or the Mujheddin, ethnic, tribal and clan loyalties, ultimately determined everything. It was a lesson neither the KGB nor the CIA ever learnt. In pages of dazzling statistics—all the more remarkable for a country that has never had a data base—the author demonstrates how the leadership and support bases of the various factions within the Mujheddin and the communist mirrored each other, in their educational background, their ethnic affiliations and social backgrounds.

Rubin makes the important point that Islam was never a guide to policy or a legitimising factor for any Afghan ruler, despite what the Mujheddin and their backers maintain. Today few have done more to globally discredit Islam and the possibilities of a true Islamic state than the Mujheddin factions.

Equally important was the dependence on foreign aid for all Afghan rulers. Up to 80% of the country's budget depended upon it until the war began in 1979 and during the war

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1995 - Volume 11 (4 issues). ISSN 0790-0627.

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The second of these reforms was proposed by the Nordic countries and approved by the General Assembly in 1993. The reform gives the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) oversight over the policy, budget and management of the big four funds and programmes. This administrative innovation may begin to put some pressure on these agencies to work more intimately together in emergency situations and force some measure of accountability when they do not. It remains to be seen whether this innovation will have salutary operational or strategic consequences.

The third reform is now being drafted within the UN secretariat. It would encourage a greater degree of information sharing, joint policy and strategy development, and overall management among the under-secretary-generals in charge of the political, military and humanitarian functions in the departments of Humanitarian Affairs, Peace-keeping Operations and Political Affairs during complex emergencies. There has been until now no formal mechanism for integrating these functions in headquarters, a situation that has not encouraged coordination among these three functions in the field. If this reform is successful, it may lead to the UN equivalent of Washington's National Security Council as a coordination and management mechanism for more coherent direction in field operations during complex humanitarian emergencies.

The fourth and perhaps most important innovation has been the creation of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC): a coordination mechanism chaired by the UN under-secretary-general for Humanitarian Affairs. Created in January 1992, it is composed of the 'big four' UN organisations: the World Health Organization; the Food and Agriculture Organization which should not have been included in the group because of its lack of expertise and operational capacity in disaster response; the ICRC (the Federation of Red Cross and Crescent Societies); and the International Organization for Migrations; and representatives of the European and US NGOs. The IASC meets quarterly, but only its principals are allowed to attend. Between meetings, working groups do much of the staff work on specific issues. This mechanism has improved the flow of information, but has been unable to design comprehensive strategies or enforce discipline in the response system. It has two major weaknesses. The donor aid agencies that fund much of this work are not members, and DHA has not had the bureaucratic

Reality check: human rights nongovernmental organisations confront governments at the United Nations

FELICE D GAER

Official acknowledgement of the importance of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in the work of the United Nations (UN) human rights programmes remains a subject of intense controversy. Warm admiration for the full range of actions by human rights NGOs expressed in the draft text prepared for the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna stands in stark contrast to the more cautious final text that was adopted.¹ Governments limited their appreciation to some but not all nongovernmental activities by notably excluding human rights monitoring from the list. Further, they declared, international human rights principles and national law protect only those NGOs 'genuinely involved in human rights'. The draft was prepared by members of the secretariat, and the final text was negotiated by government representatives from 171 countries. The differences between the two reveal the gap between, on the one hand, the dependency of UN expert human rights mechanisms on information supplied by human rights NGOs and, on the other hand, government resentment of NGO reports and activism. Many governments, especially those criticised by nongovernmental organizations, persistently labour to limit the formal access and participation of nongovernmental human rights organisations and to challenge the legitimacy of their findings.²

This seeming contradiction of maintaining both dependency and distance reflects certain fundamental characteristics associated with human rights NGOs themselves and the goals that they seek to advance through the United Nations and other international bodies. Yet human rights NGOs are the engine for virtually every advance made by the United Nations in the field of human rights since its founding.

NGOs put human rights into the UN Charter

That the United Nations addresses human rights issues at all is revolutionary. The initiative to turn the UN Charter into an instrument concerned with promoting respect for the human rights of individuals came from the 42 US organisations invited to be present as 'consultants' to the United States delegation at the founding conference in San Francisco in 1945. Their conviction that respect for human rights and the dignity of the individual was essential to peace and conflict prevention stemmed not merely from deep-seated American

scene-setting introduction, the main chapters focus on individual countries. Like most of the existing structural adjustment literature, they also only address the national scale and are thus unable to discern the sometimes significant regional and local variations in impacts.¹

These studies are interesting, presented in generally dispassionate tones and supported by numerous tables and graphs of detailed macroeconomic data. The prose style is clear and easy to read and absorb. Although much of the story is familiar, students of the countries concerned will find plenty to consider, especially as the case studies of the non-anglophone states are among the most detailed and up-to-date available in English outside of World Bank and similar reports.

By contrast, a great deal has been published on adjustment in Ghana, one of the World Bank's claimed showpieces of what can be achieved with political will and external assistance. World Bank staff and Ghanaian government ministers have been claiming annual economic growth rates of about 5% since the beginning of the 1990s and argue that the Programme of Actions to Mitigate the Social Costs of Adjustment (PAMSCAD) has addressed some of the worst social problems. However, this view of the world is contested by critics of the Bank, both inside and outside the country, who argue that many professional and middle class Ghanaians, as well as the urban poor in particular, are systematically far worse off. Harold Alderman's study avoids this controversy, not even hinting at alternative positions. The title of his chapter, 'Ghana: Adjustment's Star Pupil?', is both unfortunate and revealing in its evocation of the grossly unequal relationship in which the debtor country is a schoolchild taking lessons from the adult experience and wisdom of the international financial institutions. This is no coincidence or momentary lapse, as we are then informed authoritatively that:

The reverting of the exchange economy to *kalabule* [ie informal or barter trade] which occurred over a period as long as a decade was basically a result of economic mismanagement. Nevertheless, successive external shocks between 1981 and 1983 can be viewed as contributing factors to economic collapse. (p 29)

There is much in the chapter with which one can readily agree, for example the greatly increased efficiency of tax collection as a significant contributor to reducing the government deficit (p 38), the benefits to producers of significantly increased real producer prices for cocoa and other crops (p 44), the short-term impact of the real increase in the minimum wage in 1985 (p 44), the difficulty of separating out the intertwined effects of various reforms (p 39), and the assertion that while PAMSCAD can provide employment and deliver services, it 'is a component of, but not a substitute for, more pervasive measures to improve health, housing and other basic services' (p 52).

However, like the other authors and, indeed, the World Bank, Alderman relies unproblematically on changes in real per capita GNP as the principal yardstick of economic fortunes. The general shortcomings of this indicator are too well known to repeat here, and yet no reference is made to alternatives, such as the UNDP's Human Development Index, designed explicitly to combine economic and social variables. However, reliance on GNP per capita has one particular and crucial additional problem in the context of economic crisis and structural adjustment. As Alderman acknowledges in the quotation above, there was a widespread reversion to *kalabule* in Ghana. This means the withdrawal of producers and exchange transactions from official markets in favour of informal or barter trade (generally referred to as parallel markets in this volume). As a direct consequence, GNP data would have fallen markedly. *What this means, though, is that the value of officially recorded economic activity fell, not necessarily that the total actual level or value of activity in the economy declined.* These two cannot be equated or conflated. Similarly, when conditions became conducive, as a